

Disability Now

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Spring (and a job?) is in the air: The Linkage Community Trust, a charity which provides training for disabled people, has won a National Training Award. David Hutt (above) is on the painting and decorating course at Weelsby Hall in Grimsby, one of the Trust's colleges.

Budget boosts job hopes

Out of work disabled people will be first in the queue for five new job schemes announced by Chancellor Norman Lamont in his March budget.

But any delight was offset by news that petrol prices were going up immediately. And next year, eight per cent VAT will be charged on domestic fuel bills - rising to 17.5 per cent from April 1995 - hitting charity-run centres as well as individual homes.

The Chancellor acknowledged that people on low incomes would have "particular problems". He promised increases in social security benefits to meet the higher costs.

But no help was mentioned for the millions of people on low incomes, often elderly people, who are ineligible for income support.

Five new job schemes worth £230 million will give special help to those who need it most - "including the disabled". There will be:

- * a new allowance for 30,000 unemployed people to take full-time vocational courses
- * a Community Action programme for 60,000 long-term unemployed to do part-time voluntary work in the community. Voluntary groups will run

the scheme

- * four "workstart" pilot schemes
- * another 10,000 places on the Business Start-Up scheme
- * a new £25 million fund for which Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) can compete with imaginative schemes for employment and job creation.

Also announced:

- * immediate increase in leaded petrol by 15p, unleaded and diesel by 12p. Car tax increased to £125.
- * 20p income tax band increased from £2,000 to £2,500 this year (to £3,000 next year), but personal allowances frozen and married couples allowance cut to 20 per cent in 1994 (elderly people will have the loss offset by receiving £200)
- * mortgage tax relief reduced to 20p in the pound in 1994 except for elderly people.
- * one-off individual gifts to charities over £250 now qualify for tax relief and the maximum amount of payroll giving is raised from £600 to £900
- * a 12 per cent tax on the National Lottery, starting 1994.

Continued on page 3

Council's £10,000 apology

A disabled woman who took Wigan Council to court because she was dissatisfied with the adaptations made to her home, has received £10,000 in damages.

Theresa Aspinall, a 50-year-old wheelchair-user, alleged that Wigan was failing in its duty under section two of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 to carry out "necessary adaptations". She also alleged it was negligent in the work it had carried out.

The case was settled out of court two days before the trial was to be heard. The £10,000 is to compensate for the inconvenience caused by the council.

The settlement has been hailed as a legal "milestone" by the Spinal Injuries Association. The charity hopes Mrs Aspinall's success will inspire other disabled people to take

Continued on page 2



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Cuts hit HELIOS

MPs and disability groups are angry that the HELIOS programme, which funds projects for disabled Europeans, has had its budget cut from 8 million ECUs a year to 5.6 million ECUs.

The European Commission Social Affairs Committee's decision means that groups such as Mobility International (MI) and the European Community Regional Secretariat of the Deaf (ECRS) face a 35 per cent cut in their budgets.

Projects including a week of events for disabled people in

Sicily, a conference for people with epilepsy in Scotland and an independent living course for young deaf people in Spain, will now have to be cancelled because MI cannot fund them.

MPs are urging the Government to put pressure on the Social Affairs Committee to reverse its decision. A Commons motion, signed by 31 MPs, condemned the HELIOS budget as "wholly inadequate".

The ECRS has warned that it will no longer be able to fund a number of European confer-

Continued on page 8

Electronic newspaper launched

Britain's first electronic newspaper for blind and visually impaired people was launched last month by the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) and *The Guardian*.

The service, provided by Electronic Text Network Associates (ETNA), took three years to develop.

Every night, the entire text of *The Guardian* will be coded and broadcast using tv teletext signals.

These signals are picked up by a receiver and fed into a user's personal computer.

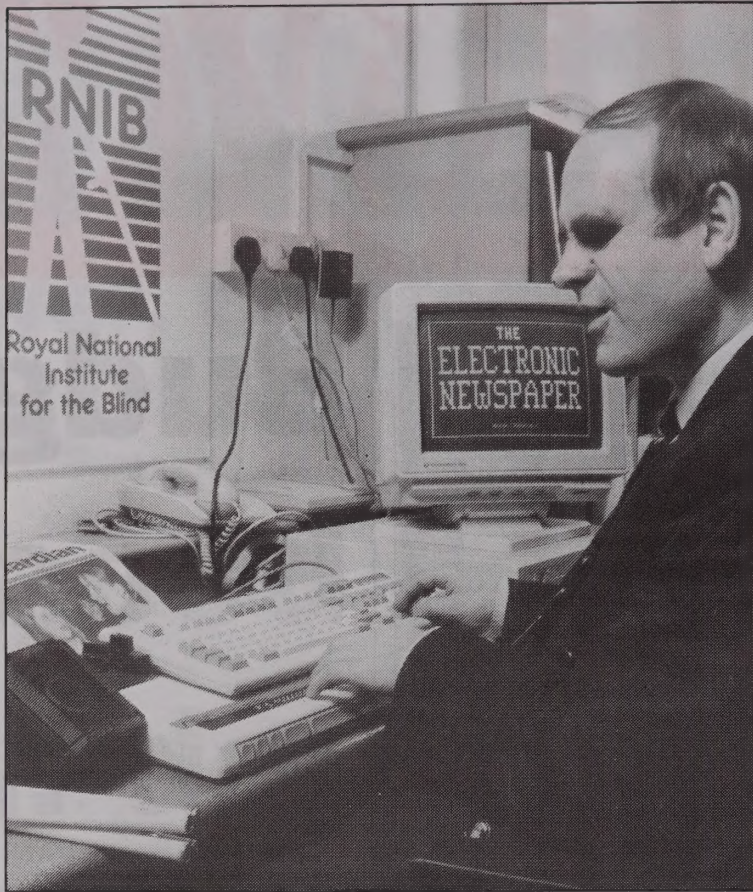
With the help of a speech synthesiser, braille or large print, blind and visually impaired people can then browse through the newspaper like everyone else.

To receive the electronic newspaper, you need a tv aerial, a special decoder, a personal computer and a speech synthesiser or braille display.

The minimum cost of the system is £560, which includes installation of the decoder and a one year subscription to *The Guardian*.

The RNIB wants other publications to join the service so that blind and visually impaired people can have a choice of newspapers to read.

Ian Bruce of the RNIB said: "This is the first time that blind and partially sighted peo-



RNIB hi-tech officer Mark Prouse reads all about it

ple have been able to read independently a daily newspaper. We hope the system will be bought by libraries and used in colleges and workplaces so that as many people as possible can benefit from it."

Brian Payne, who is blind and has been trying out the

system for the RNIB, said: "It is marvellous to be able to read a paper in the same way as sighted people. The system is very easy to use. It has made a tremendous difference to my life."

RNIB, tel: 071-388 1266.

Disabled children 'need protection'

Urgent action must be taken to protect disabled children from abuse, say two reports from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

It thinks the children are more vulnerable to abuse than able-bodied children because they may be in care or find it difficult to speak out.

The NSPCC recommends that: child protection workers should be trained about disabled peoples' needs; a prevention programme for disabled children should be developed so they know how to get help; and information on child abuse should be given to parents.

NSPCC director Christopher Brown said: "These reports explode the myth that disabled children are safe from abuse. Action needs to be taken

because some professionals find it hard to believe that disabled children can be abused and as a result may not realise when a child needs protection."

Abuse of Children and Adults with Disabilities was based on interviews with 34 people. All 17 of the people who were disabled had been sexually, physically and emotionally abused by either relatives or staff in hospitals and homes.

Bridging the Gap is based on the experiences of the author, Ruth Marchant, a child care manager, plus interviews with 15 disabled children aged seven to 17 where abuse was suspected.

Abuse of Children and Adults with Disabilities, £6.99, and *Bridging the Gap*, £5.95, NSPCC, tel: 071-242 1626.

Prescriptions up again

Prescription charges are to rise by 50p to £4.25 on 1 April.

The increase of just over 13 per cent is the 15th rise since 1979 when the charge was 20p.

Also to rise by 13.3 per cent: charges for elastic stockings and tights, fabric supports and wigs supplied through the hos-

pital service; prescription prepayment certificates, for people who need frequent or extensive medicine but are not entitled to free prescriptions.

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Council's £10,000 apology

Continued from page 1

local authorities to court if they are not satisfied with their home adaptations

Mrs Aspinall's husband Ray said: "We are very relieved to get this compensation because the council have caused us no end of trouble. They installed a stairlift which Theresa could not use and failed to re-house us when they modified our bathroom. Theresa caught infections as result of the filth caused by the workers."

The council has now agreed to carry out all the adaptations recommended by Mrs Aspinall's surveyor and to re-house her family while the work is done.

The Aspinall's solicitor Brian Barr said: "This is an important case which shows that councils will be taken to task if they do not perform their duty to make adaptations fully and efficiently. It should encourage disabled people to take legal action if they find themselves being fobbed off by a council not prepared to carry out all necessary adaptations."

A Wigan council spokesperson said: "We deal with many hundreds of applications for adaptations and the overwhelming majority give a greatly improved quality of life. On this occasion we got one wrong and we are sorry, especially for any distress caused."

Stammer therapy

The first centre to specialise in treating children who stammer has opened at Finsbury Health Centre, London. It is for children from all over the UK, but there is a long waiting list.

Two therapists are seeing five new children a week and treating 30 regularly.

TV presenter Michael Palin, who has lent his name to the centre, launched the Sponsor a Child for Speech Therapy scheme, to help raise funds. He is vice-president of the Association for Research into Stammering in Childhood, which developed the centre with Camden and Islington Community Health Services NHS Trust.

The Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children, tel: 071-837 0031

Look out for DN's regional supplement on the north of England in the May issue!



Eastender Elizabeth Powers with (from left) Gordon Kaye, Jean Boht, Ben Elton, Bob Holness, Janet Brown and Barry Cryer launch the Spastics Society's My Right fundraising and awareness campaign, which has so far raised £25,000. Elizabeth, mother of Patrick and wife of Michael Aspel, said: "Patrick is part of a new wave of cp people who've been brought up and will live in the real world. And therefore the world has got to make some concessions to them."

Charities hit back

Charities, squeezed between falling donations, inadequate income support to meet residential fees and escalating demands for help with community care, have hit back.

The Voluntary Organisations Disability Group, representing 11 charities who provide residential care, including Mencap and the Spastics Society, has written to local authorities saying they cannot afford to plug gaps in community care funding.

A spokesperson said: "Voluntary groups have received advice from the Charity Commissioners stating that it is inappropriate for them to be forced to use voluntary or charitable income to fund what should be provided and resourced by the state."

"In any case, the funds aren't available. This money should be used for other purposes, such as service innovation and developing advocacy."

The growing financial plight of charities was highlighted by *Henderson Top 1,000 Charities*, a guide published by Hemming-

ton Scott last month.

Compiler Peter Scott said: "Although a few charities are well endowed, most are struggling and have stretched things as far as they can."

The Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), funded by local authorities and trade unions, has found the gap between income support and home fees "a significant and widespread problem" pushing many voluntary groups into short-term planning, with no money for improvements.

Another report, from the National Union of Local Government Officers (NALGO), claims that community workers are constantly chasing charities for money to care for disabled people because of the shortfall in Government funding.

Henderson Top 1,000 Charities, £75, tel: 071-278 7769.

Community Care, NALGO, free, tel: 071-497 9400.

Caught in the Care Trap, LGIU, free, tel: 071-608 1051.

Budget boosts training

Continued from page 1

In a budget that put off much of the nasty medicine until 1994 so as to encourage economic recovery, all tax payers will lose a little this year, it is estimated by a computer analysis in *The Independent*.

But, by next year, when the measures are in full swing, the poorest ten per cent of households are likely to be hardest hit, losing three per cent of their income, twice as much as the highest income households.

Mr Lamont has said: "The overall effect of the budget over the two-year measures is that the better-off pay most."

While the training initiatives have been generally welcomed, extending VAT to fuel and power bills has been roundly condemned.

Help the Aged immediately demanded a rise in pensions to meet the extra costs of heating incurred by elderly people. Many do not get income support.

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) said that heating and hot water are major extra costs for disabled people. "We urge the Chancellor to think again. Already for thousands of disabled people the choices are stark: heat your home - or eat."

Labour and Tory MPs, including Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown, have added to the pressure on the Government.

Treasury Chief Secretary Michael Portillo's remark that index-linked benefits upratings would also take account of the petrol price rise, even though "People on low incomes are very low users of road fuel," has annoyed disabled drivers.

According to Douglas Campbell, chairman of the Disabled Drivers' Association: "Disabled

people are often dependent on road transport: it is the only door to door method. If they live in the country and have regular trips to hospital, or parents take their disabled children to centres for intensive programmes, they will use the car a lot more, so this will have a substantial impact on many of them."

The Charities Tax Reform Group says the measures to encourage giving are more than offset by the VAT imposition.

The 12 per cent tax on the National Lottery has been described as "sheer greed."

VAT relief gets tightened up

There is widespread concern that customs and excise officials are charging VAT on products for visually impaired people.

The law says that disabled people should be exempt from tax on equipment that is necessary because of their disability.

But Philippa Wisbey, manager of Professional Vision Service in Hertfordshire, was told in March that people buying CCTV, which magnifies print on a tv monitor, could no longer

claim VAT relief. "I was amazed. Our products are obviously designed for disabled people."

Managing director Simon Fouracres of Horizon, another company, says he was told by Nottingham's senior customs and excise officer in March that someone buying CCTV would have to be "substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury, or congenital deformity" to qualify.

The customs officer added

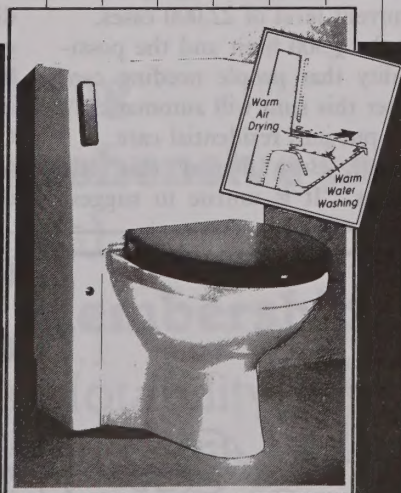
that most visually impaired people would not be entitled to claim zero rating.

Mr Fouracres said: "We've sold our products for 15 years and never had any problems. It's ridiculous to say visually impaired people should not get VAT relief because a few able-bodied people use them as well."

A customs and excise spokesman said: "It is up to local offices to decide who qualifies for relief. People can always appeal."

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Government ready to talk about Rights Bill

Alison Rowat reports

The Government is to open talks with MPs from the All-Party Disablement Group (APDG) on anti-discrimination legislation.

Prime Minister John Major has told Minister for Disabled People Nicholas Scott to discuss "whether and, if so, how legislation could play a part in seeking to reduce or eliminate discrimination against disabled people." The first meeting was to be on 25 March.

The significance of the move is being played down by Mr Scott's department, but it is a clear shift away from the hard-line refusals of the past.

The offer follows the second Government block of Labour MP Alf Morris's Civil Rights (Disabled Persons) Bill in February.

After a five-hour debate in front of a packed gallery of dis-



Labour MP Roger Berry signs a petition in support of anti-discrimination legislation at a conference in Bristol the day after the Bill's blocking. With him are Christine Holt and Penny Germon of the Avon Coalition of Disabled People.

abled supporters, Tory whip Andrew MacKay followed Government orders and cried "object" to kill the Bill.

Mr Morris had earlier told MPs: "The tide has turned on those who argue that the law has no part to play in achieving full social equality for disabled people. The question today is not whether British Ministers will go with the tide but whether they will be the last in the developed world to do so."

But Mr Scott was not yet ready to swim with the tide.

"My head and my heart divide on the Bill," he confided. Discrimination definitely existed, said Mr Scott, but Mr Morris's Bill was too wide-ranging, and would imply considerable costs for "employers, suppliers and the Government".

In response to criticism of the employment quota system, he confirmed - as reported in last month's *DN* - that Employment Secretary Gillian Shep-

hard has it under review and will announce proposals "in the not too distant future".

Labour's Spokesperson on Disabled People's Rights Barry Sheerman savaged the Minister for "kicking disabled people in the teeth."

"The Minister has done the bidding of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Social Security rather than standing his corner and standing up for the rights of disabled people in Britain."

The Civil Rights Bill was down for a second reading again on 26 March, but stood little chance of success.

Meanwhile, Stephen Bradshaw, chair of Voluntary Organisations for Anti-Discrimination Legislation - whose 30 members include RADAR and the Spastics Society - is to write again to the Prime Minister expressing the group's "utter disappointment" at the blocking.

Fear of chaos clouds ILF changeover

With only days to go before the new Independent Living Fund schemes start operating, MPs fear the changeover could be as chaotic as the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) switch.

The old Independent Living Fund (ILF), which gave cash help to enable severely disabled people to live in their own homes, stopped taking new applications last November. Two funds replace it on 1 April.

The Independent Living (Extension) Fund will continue making payments to existing ILF beneficiaries. It will get £120 million for 1993-94.

The Independent Living (1993) Fund is for new claimants. Local authorities will provide services to the value of £200 a week. The 1993 fund will top this up with a weekly discretionary cash payment to the user of up to £300. Only

severely disabled people aged between 16 and 65 will qualify. The first year's budget will be just over £4 million, from which it is estimated around 1,500 people will get help.

At the second reading of the Disability (Grants) Bill in March, Liberal Democrat Social Security Spokesperson Archie Kirkwood said there had not been enough time to consider the Bill properly, the funding was not enough, and consultation with disability groups had been "inadequate".

"We do not want any of the chaos that occurred with the DLA and Disability Working Allowance ... We must not put people through that again."

Minister for Disabled People Nicholas Scott said the only change existing beneficiaries would see was a different name on the cheque.

For new claimants, Social Security Parliamentary Under-Secretary Alistair Burt said: "The new fund will deal with a much smaller group of people, so the degree of bureaucratic difficulty will not be as great as Opposition members suggest."

Other concerns included:

- * limiting of the 1993 fund to people between 16-65. In November 1992, over a third of ILF claimants were over 65.

- * the £4 million budget for the first year of the 1993 fund which will help only 1,500 people. Since beginning in 1988, the ILF has taken on over 4,000 cases a year, building up to the current level of 22,000 cases.

- * the £500 limit and the possibility that people needing care over this sum will automatically be put into residential care.

Mr Burt denied this last point. "It is untrue to suggest

that authorities will opt to pay £800 or £1,000 to place somebody in residential care when such expenditure, or less, could support that individual in the community."

A Department of Social Security spokesperson later confirmed this. Local authorities must spend at least £200 to "trigger" an ILF payment. "But there is nothing in the Bill to prevent them spending whatever they wish on the care of a person."

Two of the new funds' seven trustees have been appointed. Mr Burt promised that at least one of the trustees would be a disabled person. Disability groups want a majority to be disabled. Margaret Baldwin, manager of a Disability Benefit Centre in Birmingham, takes over from Judith Hoyle as director.

Quota shame for Government

New Government figures show that the Civil Service has again failed to employ its three per cent quota of registered disabled people.

The 1992 figures, published in February, show the Civil Service employs nearly 8,500 registered disabled staff. This is over 300 more than last year.

But at 1.5 per cent, it still falls short of the three per cent quota required under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944.

The worst offender, with 0.3 per cent disabled people, was the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Only five departments and agencies achieved their quota: the Intervention Board; the Employment Group; the National Galleries of Scotland; the Registers of Scotland; and the Paymaster General's Office.

Included among the rest:

Department	'91 %	'92 %
Cabinet Office	1.3	1.0
Defence	0.9	0.8
Education	2.6	2.6
Health	0.7	1.3
Home Office	0.4	0.4
Scottish Office	1.1	1.4
Social Security	1.8	1.8
HM Treasury	1.0	0.9
Trade & Industry	1.1	1.0
Transport	1.3	1.3
Welsh Office	1.3	1.5

Clampers clampdown

The Government is considering the introduction of new rules barring the wheelclamping of disabled drivers' cars on private land.

A Home Office consultation document, published in February, outlines six options to tackle the growing problem. Proposals include making clampers wear uniforms and barring them from clamping disabled drivers' cars.

Wheelclamping on Private Land: A Consultation Document, from Room 339, the Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT, tel: 071-273 2168. Response deadline: 31 May 1993.

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'Mad cow' campaign launched

An all-party group of MPs has been formed to help the parents of people who have developed Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD).

Eight people have so far died of CJD, a human form of so-called "mad cow disease", after being injected with contaminated human growth hormone.

Thirty parents are taking on the Government in a bid to get compensation. They launched legal proceedings in January after being granted legal aid. A steering committee of solicitors is fighting their case.

The parents believe that the Department of Health was negligent in supplying the hormone and in failing to warn them of the risks.

They are being supported by 140 MPs who signed a Commons motion in February calling for the establishment of a compensation fund.

Wallasey MP Angela Eagle, who sponsored the motion, said: "We are forming a campaign group because many MPs like myself have constituents with CJD. We want to do all we can to help them."

A Department of Health spokesperson said: "Any legal action will be defended on the grounds that at the time it was administered, the treatment conformed with the information that was available on good practice."



Kulpid Singh-Barni (left) and Chris Burgess can't mask their delight while dancing with the Connections Dance Company. The integrated dance group staged their first public performance at the All Saints' Centre in Whetstone, North London, last month.

MARIA BARTHA

Relatives want bigger role

Relatives want to become more involved with the care of their relations in residential homes, according to a survey published last month.

The Relatives' Association survey of 65 people revealed that a third felt awkward about raising problems. Another third felt uninvolved in the resident's care.

Most relatives wanted to know more about how the home is organised and what it

is trying to achieve.

The Association's founder Dorothy White said: "Relatives must be brought onto the inside, otherwise they carry too great a burden of guilt, often realising care is not good enough, but not feeling able to be properly involved to get things right."

Relative Views, £2, The Relatives' Association, 16 Bonny Street, London NW1 9PG.

Save our school plea by parents

Parents have launched a campaign to save the only school for children with speech and language difficulties in Manchester from closure.

Manchester City Council has put forward four options for Ewing school in Didsbury, which provides speech therapy and a specially adapted curriculum for 58 pupils, aged five to 16. It also provides six residential places.

The options include:

- * closing the school's residential accommodation;
- * transferring pupils over the age of 11 to mainstream schools;
- * shutting the school's premises and amalgamating it with a service for hearing impaired children.

Head teacher Douglas Williams said: "There is a lot of anxiety about these plans. Some of our children have severe speech difficulties and would not get the support they need if they were moved to another school. They might

also suffer a lot of teasing."

Parents have put forward their own proposal, to keep the school as it is, which the council has agreed to consider.

Anne Billington, whose son Simon waited three years for a place at the Ewing, said: "We are furious about these proposals because the school does a wonderful job. The change in Simon has been unbelievable since he came here. There is no local alternative. If Ewing closed Simon would have to go to Nottingham."

A council spokesperson said: "The proposals have been put forward as part of our review of special school provision and no decision will be made until 21 April, by which time we will have consulted widely with the parents."

"We need to see if we are making the best possible use of resources we have at a time when we know there is not going to be any more money from Government for this vital service."

Money talks for blind customers

The Bank of Scotland has become the first British bank or building society to launch a financial newsletter on tape for blind and partially sighted people.

The free cassette, produced with the help of Scottish Braille Press, provides information on topics such as travel services and insurance.

The bank is planning to

introduce large print statements and "talking" statements on cassette later this year.

A bank spokesperson said: "This is the first opportunity blind people have had to keep in touch with the personal finance topics covered by the main national newspapers."

The Scottish Braille Press, tel: 031-662 4445.

New Insurance Scheme to Help you "Keep Mobile"

Motorists with disabilities have special requirements when they have an accident and their car has to be repaired. To be deprived of mobility and independence is devastating and is only catered for adequately by Fish Insurance under their "Keep Mobile" scheme.

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DESIGNER DISABLED APPLIANCES

IN BRIEF

Spring success

Newton Products, the Spastics Society factory where over half the staff are disabled people, has just won a £225,000 order for its new Badger Attendant powered wheelchair.

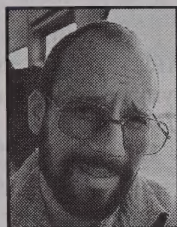
The order - with another expected this month - has come from Northern Regional Health Authority.

Specially designed for people who need a powered chair but cannot manoeuvre it themselves, the Badger Attendant enables a carer to control the chair with very little effort. Newton worked with South Birmingham health authority to create it.

Tel: 021-783 6081.

Top of the world

John Mitchell from Fetcham, Surrey, (*right*) has become the world's top blind mountaineer following his ascent of Aconcagua, the highest mountain in the Andes.



The ten-man team took seven days to climb the 6,959m mountain.

Mount Everest is the next challenge.

Mr Mitchell is trying to raise £100,000 for the British Retinitis Pigmentosa Society and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (*DN*, June 1992).

Please send cheques to Climb for Sight, PO Box 155, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 9YF.

One-stop advice works

A one-stop advice and support service for young disabled people could mean fewer emergency hospital admissions and big savings for the NHS.

The Disability Action Project is based at Christchurch Hospital in Dorset. Trained staff (usually nurses) assess each person, tailoring information and advice to their needs, and referring them to agencies that can provide services. After the assessment, people can keep in touch via a telephone helpline or volunteer visitors.

A report found that users had higher morale and were less likely to be re-admitted to hospital for emergency treatment. If they were admitted, it was for shorter periods. This could save the NHS £55,000 in the first year, says the report*.

* Summary £5, Disability Action, tel: (0202) 486361.

Corrections

Two from our Scottish Special (*DN*, March): The Wren Cycle from Howie Cycles costs £425, not £225. Tel: (0290) 25910. David Wood, Mobility Specialist, can be contacted on (0674) 83710.



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Disabled people from the Scottish Council for Spastics' Upper Springland centre invited local children in to learn about computer art in March.

There was an exhibition of the children's work at the end of the four-day workshop.

At the controls is Joyce Carle from Upper Springland (*left*), Martin Jones of Ruthvenfield Primary (*centre*) and Wyness Glennie, project co-ordinator.

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Disabled Germans live in fear

Disabled Germans fear attacks on them will continue after last month's success of the right-wing Republikaner party in local elections.

A 55-year-old disabled man, Bruno Kappi, died after being attacked by two skinheads in Siegen. He was set upon at 5am on his way to the bus-stop by two youths. The prosecutor said: "These people think that disabled people don't deserve to live."

Gunter Schirmer from Grossburgwedel near Hannover, 46, committed suicide after being spat on and pushed over by students on his way to college.

His wife once travelled to college with her husband and was shocked to see the torment he went through. Students were shouting "Under Hitler they would have gassed you a long time ago. You are living on taxpayers' money."

She said: "He was so ashamed of his powerlessness to defend himself against these attacks. Two weeks before his death his fear of humiliation became so great that he could not go out onto the streets."

A school class of disabled children in Stendal, formerly East Germany, was set upon by a group of skinheads. Two girls were seriously injured.

Another school for children with disabilities in Halle, central

Germany, received anonymous phone calls threatening to burn the school down, and saying "we are the right-wing radicals".

Flensburg County Court in former East Germany awarded damages to a family that complained of having to share a dining room with disabled people. The judge said: "The unavoidable sight of the disabled people at every meal was a constant reminder of the possibility of human suffering."

Ottmar Miles-Paul of Disabled People International in Germany said: "There is a paragraph in the Constitution protecting groups that were persecuted during the Third Reich. Disabled people are not included in this legislation. We need protection, and the Government is not very willing."

A spokesperson for the German Ministry for the Family and Older People said: "I have no knowledge of these attacks."

Europe-wide innovations in information

A travel information system in Munich, Germany, helps disabled people to find their way around the city, and a video phone service in France allows callers to see each other.

These are two innovative schemes featured in the April pilot edition of a new newsletter, *Innovations in Information*, which the National Information Forum (NIF) plans to publish three times a year. The annual subscription will be £10.

Editor Ann Darnbrough, chair of NIF, said: "Our aim is to raise awareness among service providers of the importance of giving information in more innovative and imaginative ways."

NIF, tel: 071-289 1670.



Gary Jelen, 27, broke the world power-lifting record for people with learning difficulties when he visited Kuwait in February. He lifted 202 kg to raise £30,000 for the Khalifa school for children with special needs. He also met Kuwaiti MPs and attended a reception in his honour.

US health chief backs cannabis use

Jocelyn Elders, the new Surgeon General (chief Government doctor) of the United States, has said she will back the medical use of cannabis.

Mrs Elders believes that cannabis is "beneficial to many patients".

The Surgeon General takes up her appointment in June.

The drug, which has been

banned in America for both personal and therapeutic use since the 1930s, can be used to relieve pain, stop nausea, help Aids patients and alleviate the symptoms of multiple sclerosis (DN, January).

In Britain, prescribing cannabis for therapeutic use is forbidden under the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act.

Walking back to happiness: Huang Sheng, five, (right) from Nanjing in the People's Republic of China, has come to Edinburgh with his parents. Helped by the Scottish Council for Spastics, he may go home after eight weeks able to walk and therefore attend school. Sheng's parents will learn how to continue the therapy when he gets home.



Cuts hit HELIOS

Continued from page 1

ences, seminars and training courses for deaf people. It has also made a staff member redundant.

Arthur Verney, the former head of the ECRS, resigned in February because the cuts meant the organisation could no longer afford to pay his salary (DN, March 1993). He said: "The reduction in the

HELIOS budget is a major disaster. The paltry sum we are getting reflects the way in which the EC institutions view disabled people - as second class citizens."

Tony Lumley of MI said it would have to cut the number of projects it funds from 18 to just 13.

"We have also been forced to make two of our staff redundant because we can't afford to pay them," he said.

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Shooting star

Paralympic bronze medalist Kevin Hyde won a fourth consecutive title at the British Sports Association for the Disabled National Air Pistol and Air Rifle championships at Aldersley in February.

The Southern Region marksman won the group one air rifle event with a score of 591.

"That was the toughest final yet," said Kevin. "The standard of competition is going up

all the time and I'll have to work hard to get a fifth title."

Robert Osborn, who was shooting for the Southern region, had a double reason to celebrate this year's championships.

After coming second in the men's group three event of the air pistol tournament, Robert won the class D category of an able-bodied competition held at the same venue.

Unlucky Illingworth loses out to Laurent



On the ball: Chris Illingworth volleys a winner

Chris Illingworth reached the semi-finals of the Australian Wheelchair Tennis Championships in February.

He won a memorable quarter-final against Dutchman Eric Stuurman before losing 6-2, 6-2 to world number one Giammertini Laurent.

"It is a little frustrating to have come so close to a final and miss out," said Chris.

"But I played some good

tennis and was beaten by a great player."

Australian Mike Connell won the men's singles final. He fought back from a set down to beat Laurent 2-6, 7-5, 6-2 in an exciting final.

Daniela Di Toro, from Victoria, beat Allison Mann, from America, 6-2, 6-1 in the women's singles final. She also won the women's doubles and mixed doubles titles.

Mixed fortunes on the slopes

British skiers enjoyed mixed fortunes during the Pre-Paralympic Alpine championships at Lillehammer, Norway, in February.

Brian Harding, from Southampton, was delighted with third place in the LW-10 super giant slalom.

"That was a great race," said Brian. "I was very pleased with my time of 2:24:77, although I think I could have gone faster."

Blind skier Vickie Sheen fell on her international debut, but recovered superbly to finish third.

"I lost my footing and crashed off the course," said Vickie. "I could have given up

but I was determined to finish."

Much was expected of Matthew Stockford, who won three bronze medals at last year's Paralympics. But he fell during his first race and then his equipment broke.

Simon Barnes and Jim Barker had a happier time, finishing sixth and eighth in the LW-11 super giant slalom.

Blind skier Peter Young was Britain's only competitor in the European Nordic championships in Germany last month.

Young won a silver medal in the biathlon and came fourth in the 5km and 20km races.



Sarah Bailey winning the 100m breaststroke at the BSAD junior national championships

Swimmers smash records

More than 100 records were broken during a junior national swimming championships held at Darlington in February.

The championships, organised by the British Sports Association for the Disabled and the Variety Club of Great Britain, were dominated by 14-year-old Jody Cundy, who set eight new national records.

The Eastern Region swimmer proved he is a great all-round swimmer by winning six medals, including victories in the 50m butterfly, 50m backstroke and 100m freestyle.

Michelle Main, 17, from Glasgow, was also in a record-breaking mood. She set six records and won ten gold medals. Michelle's best race was the 50m backstroke, which she won with a new record of

50.94 seconds.

"I only hope I can repeat my success when I take part in next year's senior championships," she said.

Kenneth Suttie, 13, from Fife, also had an outstanding weekend. He set six national records. "I was confident I'd do well," said Kenneth. "But I am surprised at the amount of records I broke. I can't wait to try and do even better next year."

Sarah Bailey, swimming for the North West Region, won the 100m breaststroke race with a record-breaking time of 1:24:80.

The team trophy was won by Scotland, whose swimmers set 32 new records. The East Midlands came second, and the North third.

The championships attracted more than 100 swimmers from all over the UK.

Scottish team manager Richard Brickley said: "This was a wonderful effort by all our team. I am delighted that our youngsters did so well because they have trained so hard. The results auger well for the future."

The Scottish squad will take on strong teams from America, Holland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland at the Rotary International Junior Swimming Championships in Ayr on 18-19 June.

Sport is written by Tim Russell, tel: 071 636 5020

Try a dive with the Wet and Dry

An integrated diving club that gives training courses to disabled people is looking for new members.

The Wet and Dry Sub Aqua Club arranges diving expeditions throughout the UK and organises diving holidays abroad. Anyone aged over 14 can join.

The club is based in Bognor Regis, but members can learn to dive closer to home if they wish. Training courses are run every month and carried out by qualified instructors.

Bruce Lampard, the club's diving officer, said: "Diving is a great fun and gives many disabled people a great sense of personal achievement. Anyone who has never dived before will be given an introductory session in a pool to find out whether they enjoy it."

Wet and Dry Sub Aqua Club, 42A Gravits Lane, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, tel: (0243) 826515.

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GRANTS TO HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities are more readily given aids and equipment to help overcome their handicaps than the necessary support to enable them to use the aids and equipment quickly and with ease. The Nuffield Foundation is therefore offering grants totalling £100,000 to organisations with ideas for projects investigating, adapting or demonstrating a way of using **existing** equipment more effectively. Packages for training the user will be eligible for support, as will the evaluation of the use of existing equipment. Applications are invited in two areas: **learning and communications aids** and **mobility aids**. The grants are not intended to help individuals buy or adapt equipment. The closing date is **30 June 1993**.

Further details may be obtained by writing to: The Nuffield Foundation, 28 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3EG; or by telephone:

Application forms/information sheets: 071-580 7434
Queries/additional information: 071-631 0566.

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Alison Rowat meets Jane Tewson, founder of Charity Projects and the woman behind Comic Relief

Seriously funny Jane

Jane Tewson looked remarkably chipper for a woman about to give birth to a multi-million pound charity fundraising extravaganza and her first baby.

Since its launch in 1985, Comic Relief has raised over £70 million (as I write the total for this year is not known). A third of the money goes to UK projects, with the rest going to Africa. After homelessness, the biggest part of the UK slice goes to disability groups.

For many, Comic Relief is the acceptable face of charity. Its mission to campaign and educate (as well as raising money and having fun), means you'll find groups like People First and Disability Alliance among its beneficiaries - groups you would normally associate with rights, not charity.

So how does Comic Relief win friends where Telethon and Children in Need make enemies? A lot of it is to do with Jane Tewson, a disenchanted charity worker who thought she could do it better and did. Now it turns out that she is a disabled person too.

She lasted only two days as a secretary at Mencap in the early '80s before her dyslexia caught up with her and she was moved on to organising projects. She didn't tell anyone about her disability. Most people only realised she had dyslexia after her mother mentioned it to the *Observer* magazine in February.

The rest is fundraising legend: how she left to set up her own charity, salvaging office furniture from skips, and persuading the likes of Sir Tim Bell (Lady Thatcher's image guru),

to pay her wage for two years.

"I felt very angry at my experience of the voluntary sector. I felt people with disabilities or people who were homeless, or older people, were at the very end of the line and they weren't getting all the support they deserved - financially or morally - either within their communities or the public at large."

Comic Relief would be different, portraying people in a positive way, bringing the concept of rights into millions of living rooms. It would help people to help themselves.

Baked beans

But for all its talk of "rights", Comic Relief still depends on Joe Bloggs sitting in a bath of baked beans to raise money for things that many believe the Government should provide. So who is Jane Tewson trying to kid?

No-one. "It's difficult giving money away. Who are we to have the arrogance to sit round this table, to raise money and say well this group will get it and that group won't. I have a real personal problem with that. Who are we? It's people's lives and they're desperate for support."

Comic Relief is trying hard to get it right. It has disabled people on the committee which distributes the grants, and from now on the emphasis will be on funding groups of (rather than for) disabled people.

For the moment, that is as far as they can go. "We'd love not to be here," says Ms Tewson. "We may well decide not to be here in two year's time. We take an enormous amount of flak from the voluntary sector about what we do and how we do it and we listen to that. There might be a stage when we say to the voluntary sector, 'Well, yes, you're right actually'."

The flak comes more from "individuals" in the disability movement rather than other charities, but it's a very civilised war. ("We've had moments of interesting discussion," says

way, Jane Tewson seems well-equipped to handle it. Not because she's a hard nut, but because she believes in what she is doing.

At 35, her success has been a

marked with minuses because I couldn't write very well. They took the creativeness of what I was saying and marked on that. We all had something to offer and I'd always offer."

Yet push her a bit more and you find out that the dyslexia did matter sometimes. At primary school, for example, she wrote about how difficult it was getting oars into the bollocks rather than the rollocks (sic). "I had to stay behind after school and write out rowlocks 500 times. I'd also have to write out "but" and "put" because I can't distinguish between bs and ps. Ridiculous."

Being "nice, middle class" and the daughter of two GPs also got her beaten up. "At the time that was terrible, but it did me no damage in the end."

All four Tewson children had varying degrees of dyslexia. But while the other three went to university, Jane failed her A Levels. "I would have liked to have gone to university, to study English. I would have liked to have done better academically. I didn't. That means you have to work bloody hard because you have to go out and earn your money."

Double life

Working bloody hard included stints as a cleaner in Oxford, where she used to slip quietly into English lectures in her spare time. It is difficult to square this image with the successful, wired-into-the-mains, mover and shaker of today.

But as she says: "It was really tough, my first three years out of school, really painful. Friends remind me that I used to go round with my head on one side because I was so shy, so lacking in confidence."

She still seems uneasy talking about herself. Only those closest to her knew about the dyslexia. Since the *Observer* piece, it seems like the whole of Britain knows.

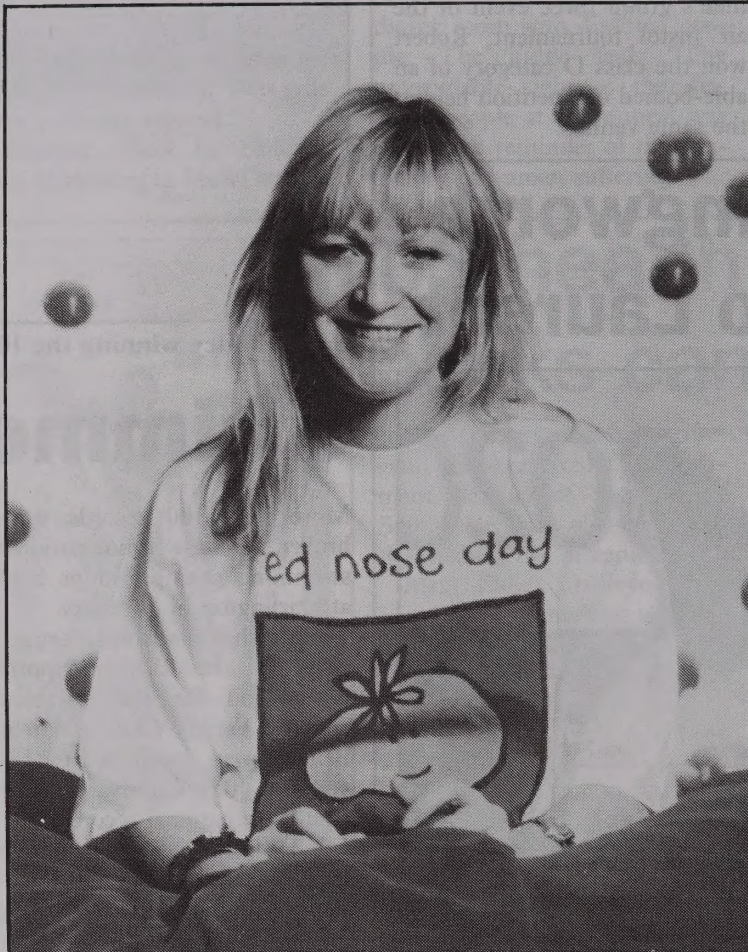
"People have rung me up and said 'Oh Jane, I never knew you were dyslexic, you poor thing,' or its 'Ooh, you're dyslexic, that's fascinating. How do you do it?' That gets you cross."

Supportive colleagues who will look work over and a spell checker on her word processor means the dyslexia is not a big deal (except if she tries to write things too fast under pressure).

She does acknowledge, though, that her disability has had its effects. "I guess it might give you more of an empathy with people for whom things have gone wrong. My instinct is certainly very good."

"My mum's got a lot to answer for!" she says, breaking into a loud laugh.

When we stop to take pictures, she zips off to find a red nose to put on. For Jane Tewson, charity is a seriously funny business.



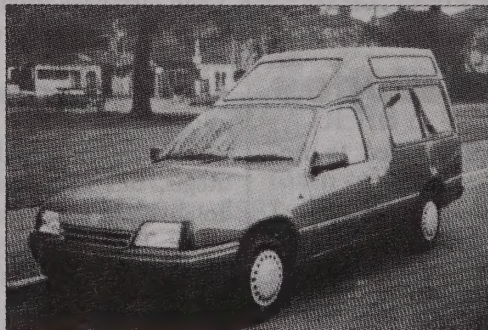
Jane Tewson: thought she could do it better and did

UK grants director Maggie Baxter, sitting in on the interview at the request of Jane. "Which we welcome," interrupts Jane. "Oh absolutely," Maggie replies.)

Whatever flak comes her

long time coming. She had a "fantastic time" at Thame Comprehensive school, playing rugby, being head girl, etc. The dyslexia wasn't a problem. "We were taught not to pass our exams but for life. I wasn't

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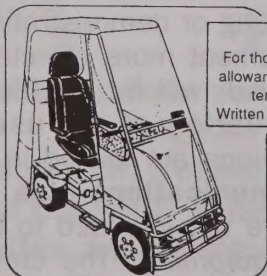
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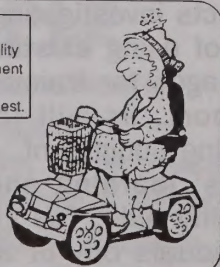


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Last month Carly Todd, aged eight months, became the first child in Britain to receive gene therapy.

Gene therapy is much discussed, but what does it mean? Is it a tremendous advance, or just another passing fad?

Many diseases involve alterations (mutations) in the genes (the recipes which tell the body's cells how to make vital products). An abnormal gene can be inherited since genes pass from one generation to another.

There are about 4,000 known inherited diseases, many of them causing severe developmental disorders. Most are very rare, but together they add up to a lot of human misery.

Gene effects are also involved in many "common" disorders, such as diabetes, heart disease, schizophrenia and cancers. Here, the genetic defect does not always cause the disease, but people with particular gene combinations are much more likely to get the disease.

Until recently, we knew these abnormal genes existed, but little more. Then, in the mid '80s, the international human gene mapping project began to reveal the whereabouts, make-up and function of hundreds of disease-causing genes. This explosive growth in human genetics led to the possibility of gene therapy.

If diseases are caused when a gene malfunctions, the obvious treatment is to correct the gene, or replace it with a properly-working copy. This is what gene therapy is about. Huge strides have been made in the past year or two.

How gene therapy works

How can we insert a working copy of a gene into someone in such a way that we alleviate a disease?

First, we must know the gene involved. So far, only a few hundred of the estimated 50,000 human genes have been identified accurately enough, but new genes are discovered every month, so this problem should soon be solved.

We also need to know the gene's exact (DNA) structure to make artificial copies.

Then we need to get the gene copies into the cells where they are needed. The body has countless million cells, and the gene must enter a reasonable number of them if it is to do much good.

Many different methods are being investigated. The current favourite uses viruses, which naturally enter animal cells and live there as parasites.

Scientists are removing harmful genes from viruses and replacing them with human genes. The "customised" virus carries the normal human gene which merges with the cell's DNA, and the genetic defect is (theoretically) corrected.

This sounds like science fiction, but consider two American children, born with a



Paul McMillan from Runcorn, Cheshire, who has cystic fibrosis (cf), with David and Annie. The first cf gene therapy trials, within the next two years, will be on adults. CYSTIC FIBROSIS TRUST

Science fiction for real

Gene therapy may revolutionise medical treatment says Martin Bobrow

severe disease of the immune system and no resistance to infection, who could only survive in completely sterile conditions. Cells from their bone marrow were infected with a gene-carrying virus and replaced. The children now go to school, with no apparent ill effects.

This astonishing success has made hundreds of scientists take gene therapy much more seriously. Now the UK Government's Clothier committee has approved gene therapy for Carly Todd, who has a similar disorder.

The first steps have been taken, but there is a long way to go. Corrected cells do not last forever, and the treatment must be repeated regularly.

If the right sort of cells - those which regularly renew the blood-cell population of the body - could be treated, then one treatment would be enough. The UK gene therapy trial will try to achieve a permanent cure.

Not all diseases can be treated via blood or bone marrow, and we need ways to treat other tissues, such as nerves, muscle, liver and skin.

For some disorders, like immune deficiencies, you only need some cells to make the right product.

Other situations are more complicated. The gene must get to the right cells, at the right time, and the amount of material produced needs to be regulated carefully. We are trying to replace one part in a complex, finely-tuned system. How to do it is not yet clear - but we think it can be done.

Are there dangers? Yes, all medical advances have potential problems.

The treatment must be safe, both for the person being treated and for others. This may be less of a problem than originally feared, because the next wave of gene carriers may

not be based on viruses at all.

There is a theoretical risk that tinkering with the genetic material may lead to long-term problems, such as other gene changes causing cancer. As with any experimental drug, progress will have to be monitored carefully.

Ethical questions have been raised, but the Clothier committee concluded that gene therapy of body cells to treat serious disease raised no important new ethical issues.

More difficult questions are

posed by germline therapy, which aims to correct the gene defect so that the correction will be passed on to an offspring. This is so far in the future that it is difficult to discuss it sensibly. The Government has accepted the Clothier committee's recommendation that it should not be attempted yet.

What can be treated?

What sorts of diseases are candidates for gene therapy?

Inherited immune defects or conditions such as cystic fibro-

sis, muscular dystrophy and haemophilia are obvious. Conditions affecting the brain, such as Lesch-Nyhan syndrome, are being approached more cautiously, because simply getting the right gene into the body will not be enough - it must get into the cells of the brain.

Less obvious but exciting candidates are some non-inherited conditions. Several groups have started trying to treat cancers by switching off cancer-inducing genes.

A British group has just revealed a clever new method of inserting a gene which will help the body recognise and kill the skin cancer cells of malignant melanoma.

Nor does it all end there. Manipulating genes may one day lower blood cholesterol in those with genetically high levels. Switching off certain immune cells may help stop arthritis. Supplying the right nerve transmission messengers, in the right place, may help people with Parkinson's disease.

Eventually, it may become possible to persuade damaged nerves and brain cells to grow again and repair brain damage.

This is still science fiction, and only a small handful of people have begun gene therapy. But if things go well we could be looking at the beginning of one of the biggest revolutions in medical treatment.

Martin Bobrow is Prince Philip professor of paediatric research at Guy's hospital, London. The paediatric research unit was set up by the Spastics Society. Professor Bobrow was a member of the Clothier committee.

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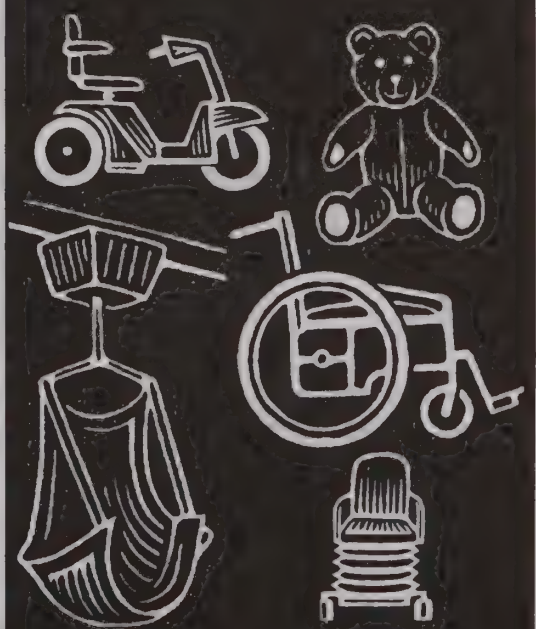
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Letters to the Editor



Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

Community care D-day

On 1 April the Government's much publicised care in the community programme comes into operation. Basically, this puts the local authorities' social services departments in the role of sign poster to services which will be provided by private or voluntary organisations.

The private supplier will only take on those responsibilities that make a profit, otherwise they will get out of the market.

If the charity income is not sufficient to meet costs then charity-based voluntary organisations cannot operate. If

fees are not adequate, the not-for-profit organisations will not be able to provide a service.

So where does that leave disadvantaged people? We are convinced our needs will not be met. We should be telling local and national politicians that more money is necessary. They need to be convinced by society. Care in the community is an "all society" issue.

Mark Walsh
Hampshire Coalition of Disabled People

Blame for cp

Research done in America, Australia and the UK indicates that only about ten per cent of

cases of cerebral palsy (cp) can be attributed to complications arising at the time of birth, and only a few of these can be attributed to medical negligence. So it would be inaccurate and misleading to suggest that "75 per cent of children (with cp) are disabled through someone's neglect" (Letters, *DN* December).

Cp is more likely to be linked to premature birth (ie events before labour), or is the result of brain damage occurring before birth.

More research needs to be done to establish which factors may lead to the development of cp. In most cases it is impossible to determine the precise cause, so the crucial link between medical intervention, negligence and injury cannot be made.

Please contact us for further information.

Dr Sylvia J Anie
Peter McDonald
The Spastics Society, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ.

"Ripping us off"

I read with interest your review of the Optron Stress Shield (Checkout, *DN* March) and agree that it is an over-priced luxury.

Back in the halcyon days when I was able to work, I was an industrial buyer. Consequently, I have a fairly good idea of what things are worth and I feel that products aimed at the disabled sector are grossly, one might say indecently, overpriced. This I find to be the case right across the board, with exceptions so few as to be remarkably hard to find.

Let me give you a few examples. In a well-known care equipment catalogue there are two items, a pastry mixer and a "mini" vacuum cleaner. Both of these are available on the open market for less than half the catalogue price. Blatant profiteering.

Also, last year, I bought an electric scooter for £2,300. After examining it, I came to the conclusion that it was probably worth, ex works (cost plus manufacturer's profit), about £1,000. A talk with a person involved in the industry

confirmed this, so it would seem that excessive profits are being made here.

Having had the ex works price confirmed, obviously all the hoary old arguments about small-volume production costing more do not hold water, the more so since the company concerned sells its products world-wide.

Surely it's time for the disabled community to challenge over-inflated prices and, if they can manage without an excessively expensive item, to boycott it.

The people who purport to be helping us are ripping us off. It has to stop.

Ronald W Graves
Oxton, Birkenhead

HIV protection

May I remind readers that the diaphragm (cap) is not an effective form of protection against HIV (Letters, *DN* March). If having intercourse, male and female condoms really are the only way to prevent HIV transmission.

Jonathan Geall
Research manager
HIV research unit
MEL Research, Birmingham

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sic



We know the job situation for disabled people is pretty bad ... Thanks to *DN* reader Jon Wilson of Wishaw for snapping a less than busy Action Group for Real Jobs Project stand at the East of Scotland Disability Exhibition in February.

Golden oldie

You may not know it, but there are millions of desperadoes out there who want to squander the nation's resources on meeting their completely unrealistic demands. Who are these fiends? Disabled people, according to Richard Ingrams, *Observer* columnist and editor of the *Oldie* magazine.

The "tyranny" is wielded by American disability groups who protested that New York's planned public loos would be inaccessible to wheelchair users. He writes: "It is surely obvious however much one sympathises, that disabled people ... cannot enjoy the same freedom of movement and opportunity as the rest of us - unless, that is, billions of pounds are to be spent on altering the environment."

Whoever said wisdom comes with age?

Pen pals

Congratulations to Victoria Scott of the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, who has just won a scholarship to go to America and look at how anti-discrimination laws work. We trust she'll send lots of postcards to her father, Minister for Disabled People Nicholas Scott, saying: "Law wonderful. Wish it was over there."

The Doings of Dan Nugent ("DN" to his friends) by Rigby





The Invalidity Benefit poverty trap

Invalidity Benefit does not entitle you to a range of other benefits, so people who receive it can be worse off than they would be on Income Support. Margaret Weeks looks at the complex system

"Invalidity Benefit (IVB) disables me and others who have worked and get this benefit. It may be £1 or £2 more than Income Support (IS) but it leaves people on it paying out many times more the difference between it and IVB by way of rent, poll tax, dental charges, prescription charges, hospital fares, cold weather payments, etc. Also, there is no entry to Social Fund Grants. I have to pay an extra £16 per month because of this wonderful IVB."

John Morrison
Livingston, Edinburgh

Mr Morrison's letter shows the poverty trap that people on IVB can fall into. He points out that if you do not get IS there is no entitlement to cold weather payments, loans or grants from the Social Fund. (Disabled and elderly people have priority for Social Fund community care grants to buy essential items which enable them to remain in their own home.) As there is no automatic entitlement to NHS costs, these have to be applied for every six months on the complicated low income scheme, which may entitle you to full or

partial help. Legal aid and disabled facilities grants are also means tested. Mr Morrison receives IVB of £65.70, giving him an excess income of about £5 above his IS needs (the amount the Government says you need to live on). He pays £4 towards his housing costs. In real terms, he has £1 more than someone receiving IS and none of the passported benefits.

"I retired in 1986 receiving IVB through ill health. I am now 65 and still receive IVB because I am on medication and have to be monitored by my GP.

"Since I was 65 my benefit has decreased £11 to £57.89 a week. I do, however, get an occupational pension of £176 and Mobility Allowance at the end of the month.

"I know this sounds a lot, but how do I live until the end of the month when my pensions are swallowed up by bills? I am left with £17.19 a week.

"I applied for IS and was refused. I have asked for social grants but to no avail."

L G Bennett
Carshalton, Surrey

Mr Bennett is struggling because he paid into an occupational pension and receives too much from it to claim IS. His excess income is £32.54 and he should pay £26.03 towards his housing costs. In real terms, he is £6.51 per week better off than someone receiving IS, but again, he does not get the passported benefits. I have advised Mr Bennett to ask for a review of his Housing Benefit. He should be receiving more help.

"I am unable to visit the optician so I applied for help towards the cost of a domiciliary visit and filled in the necessary form. The certificate I received from the Benefits Agency (BA) was for limited help only - £14.67. My bill for the domiciliary visit was £35.

This made me wonder about the Government's response to protests against the increasing charges for items such as eye tests - that people living on benefit (especially those with no savings) are excluded from most or all of the charge. I put this point to the BA

and, almost by return of post, received a new certificate, this time for a full benefit entitlement towards my eye test and spectacles. Why did they change their minds?"

Miss J L Dillon
Chelmsford, Essex

Miss Dillon was only entitled to partial NHS costs. She is living in her brother's home so it is assumed she has no housing costs. The BA says its original decision was correct and Miss Dillon was wrongly awarded an additional premium because an officer overlooked the fact that someone receives Invalid Care Allowance for her. (Her sister-in-law and brother gave up work to care for her.) The BA is not asking for a return of the certificate because it was its error.

It should not be forgotten that disabled people have enormous living costs - extra heating, transport, equipment and often the costs of an assistant. People on IVB who have had to give up work because of a degenerative illness do not always realise that they may be entitled to Disability Living

Allowance (DLA), and, often, if they live alone, to IS.

Those who make claims for DLA may not express their needs well enough on the applications, so they are turned down. This is the negative side to self-assessment. Under the old system, a visiting doctor would recognise those needs.

I spend most of my time on the Cerebral Palsy Helpline and in the Citizens' Advice Bureau helping people appeal against DLA decisions and clarifying the benefits system to them.

Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, says he wants to "simplify the benefits system". He should come and see me trying to explain it to the people it is intended to benefit. If you feel strongly about the poverty trap or the complexities of the system, do write to him.

Peter Lilley, Department of Social Security, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS.

Margaret Weeks can only tackle wider benefits issues. For routine benefits advice, contact your local Citizens' Advice Bureau.

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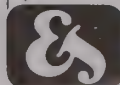
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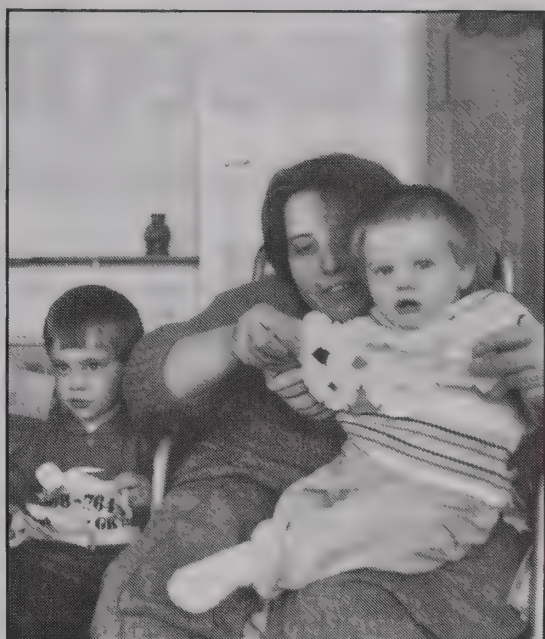
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What's it all about?

The final bits of the community care jigsaw slot into place this month. Alison Rowat reports



PHOTOS: KATHY KEMM, SARA MURRAY

What is community care?

Community care aims to allow elderly and disabled people to live as independently as possible in their own homes or in a "homely setting". It could mean, for example, that you get meals on wheels or a home help to enable you to stay in your own home. Or it could mean moving into a residential or nursing home. The services you get do not have to be provided by the local authorities (LAs): they could be run by private operators or charities.

How did it come about?

The idea that people are best cared for in the community is not new. After two major reports in the 1980s, the Government set out the current arrangements in the NHS and Community Care Act 1990.

What has happened?

The reforms have been phased: 1991: LA complaints procedures set up; specific grants for LAs to care for mentally ill people introduced; LA inspection units established 1992: LAs began to publish community care plans, following consultation with district health authorities, family health service authorities, housing authorities, voluntary organisations and, in some cases, disabled people. The plans set out what help will be available to disabled and elderly people and their carers.

What will happen in April?

Many community care schemes have been on the go for some time. The final parts of the jigsaw slot in this month: * money that the Department of Social Security would have spent on providing residential and nursing home care will be transferred to LAs * social services departments (social work departments in Scotland) become responsible for assessing what help you need and for making the arrangements to provide it * new funding arrangements for people who need help paying for residential and nursing home care come into effect.

How will assessment work?

Your local social services

department will assess what kind of help can be arranged for you. One of the key ideas of community care is that disabled people and their carers are fully involved in deciding what kind of care is provided. It is your right to have a say.

Can I get anything I want?

No. After the assessment, the LA decides which services it ought to provide. This will be determined by many factors. The most important of these will be the availability of support from family and friends and the amount of money the authority has to spend. Health Secretary Virginia Bottomley has warned councils not to "create commitments that are beyond their means". After the assessment you get a care plan, a written statement of the services to be provided.

Will there be charges?

For day and home care services like meals on wheels, it depends on where you live. It is up to each LA to decide how much they will charge, if at all. The Government advises that rates should be "reasonable".

If you cannot pay, the LA is obliged to consider whether the charge can be waived or reduced. If you have been assessed as needing a service, the service should not be withdrawn because of inability to pay. But, as the Government's information pack for the voluntary and private sectors advises, "Ultimately, the local authority may recover any outstanding charges as a civil debt in a magistrates' court."

What happens if I need to go into a home?

If you are already in a registered residential care home or nursing home on 31 March 1993 you can still claim the special higher levels of Income Support (IS). But these "preserved rights" can be lost through absence from a home for more than 13 weeks.

If you move in from 1 April, you come under the new arrangements. You can claim IS on the same basis as if you were living in your own home.

The IS will include a residential allowance of £45 a week (£50 in Greater London). Social services will pay the home's fees, and you pay them back according to your income - including benefits - and capital. People living in homes run or managed by the local authority will not get residential allowance.

Can I go anywhere I choose?

Within limits. If social services decide that you need residential care, they will recommend certain homes. You do not need to follow their recommendation. You can choose another home, provided (among other things):

- * it meets the needs set out in the assessment
- * it does not cost any more than the authority would usually expect to pay for someone with your needs.

In an important test case, a disabled man is now fighting Avon County Council in the High Court for the right to go to the care home of his choice. Mark Hazell wants to go to a home which costs £9,000 a year. Avon want him to go to one which costs £6,000 (DN, March).

If social services say no and you still want to go to the more expensive home, the LA has to arrange a place there. However, there must be a "third party" able and willing to pay the difference between what the local authority is prepared to pay and the actual cost of the home. The third party could be a relative, a charity, or, if the LA agrees, you.

What about the ILF?

The Independent Living Fund (ILF), which enables severely disabled people to live independently in their own homes, stopped taking new applications last November (DN, January). Two funds will replace it. The Independent Living (Extension) Fund will continue making payments to existing ILF beneficiaries. The Independent Living (1993) Fund starts operating in April. LAs will provide care to the value of around £200 a week. The fund will supplement this with

a weekly discretionary cash payment to the user of up to £300. Only people between 16-65 will get help.

What if I am unhappy with the arrangements?

Complain. LAs should have complaints procedures up and running. It is their duty to inform you what the procedure is and how to use it.

More information?

The address of your local social services department is in the phone book, or get the telephone number from directory enquiries if you cannot use a phone book.

The Government has produced an information pack for the voluntary and private sectors. See advert in DN March or write to Community Care, Freepost BS528/90, Bristol BS3 3YY. As DN went to press, the Government was about to launch a public information campaign about community care, including

freephone telephone information lines. Look out for advertisements in the media.

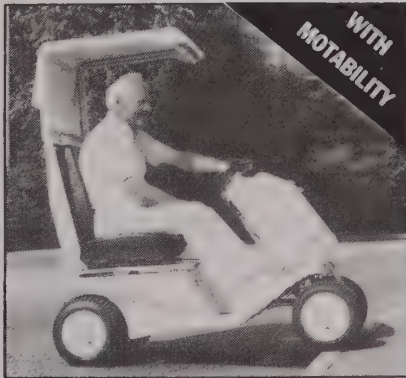
Disability groups should be able to give advice. The Royal National Institute for the Blind, for example, will operate an information advocacy service. Contact Andy Barrick, tel: 071-388 1266.

One of the best books on the changes is *The Community Care Handbook* by Barbara Meredith. £11.95, Age Concern England, National Council on Ageing, Astral House, 1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER, tel: 081-679 8000. Age Concern is running a seminar on community care on 23 April in Bristol. £65 (includes copy of book). Contact Steven Haynes, tel: (0202) 298118.

Also available is *Caring at Home*, a handbook for carers, by Nancy Kohner. £6.95 from Bournemouth English Book Centre (BECB), PO Box 1496, Poole, Dorset BH12 3YD. Tel: (0202) 715555.

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DN4/93

Pioneering projects point the way

More and more community care schemes are being set up. Tim Russell takes a look at four projects around Britain that have

Banbury District Carers' Centre, Oxfordshire

A pioneering centre in Oxfordshire is providing carers with a wide range of information, advice and support.

The Banbury District Carers Centre is the first of many that the Princess Royal Trust for Carers plans to develop throughout Britain.

The trust has injected £40,000 into the Banbury centre and sees it as a flagship for many more in 130 key local authorities.

The centre has four other funders. Oxfordshire County Council has agreed to give £45,000, Oxfordshire Family Health Services Authority £30,000, Oxfordshire District Health Authority £30,000 and Cherwell District Council £10,000.

The centre itself has raised £1,000 and the public has donated furniture.

It opened last October and is run by a staff of three, led by Judith Marsh.

The centre holds advice sessions, support groups and runs a home help service. There is also a regular drop in time when anyone can come in for coffee and a chat.

"We try to be as flexible and adaptable as possible in our services because we have

found that no two carers have the same need," said Mrs Marsh.

"There is no such thing as a typical carer. Each one that visits us has different problems."

advice.

Many care for elderly people with Alzheimer's disease, but others care for physically disabled people and people with learning difficulties.



Banbury centre manager Judith Marsh (left) advises carer Eve Twigge.

TIM RUSSELL

The Banbury centre has 50 carers on its books so far. Sixty per cent of these people have repeated their visits and some call regularly.

More than 40 per cent of the carers who have contacted the centre need general support and counselling, while 17 per cent need relief care and ten per cent welfare rights

Eve Twigge, whose husband has had Alzheimer's disease since 1988, has found the centre's support invaluable.

She is a member of the Banbury Alzheimer's disease support group and looks forward to the meetings.

"We meet once a week and share our experiences," said Mrs Twigge. "Being a carer

can make you feel very isolated at times, so it's a great relief to be able to come here and meet people who are having similar experiences to you. I always feel much better for coming here."

The centre also provides a respite care service, which Mrs Twigge uses when she visits her mother at a Lincoln residential home.

Banbury is unique in having a development fund which it can use to buy a variety of services.

Mrs Marsh has just negotiated a contract with a local residential home which has agreed to provide the centre with day care services.

She said: "We are fortunate to have funds to buy services and make contracts."

"Our first concern is to make sure our carers have the services they need, so where there are gaps, we will work with local organisations to provide additional care over and above what the social services department provides."

"I do not see this as a short-term project. We hope to develop the service and help as many people as possible."

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, 16 Bywood Street, London EC3R 5BA, tel: 071-480 7788.

Banbury Carers Centre, Alexandra House, Church Passage, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 8JZ, tel: (0295) 264545.



There's no place like home: Valerie cooking in their own Weir Street flat

Lincoln Association for the Care of the Elderly

A Lincoln charity has been given over £33,000 to run three day centres and provide visiting services for elderly people.

The grant and a certificate of partnership has been given to Lincoln Association for the Care of the Elderly (LACE) as part of Lincolnshire County Council's support programme to local voluntary organisations.

LACE was formed in 1958 with the aim of improving the quality of life of elderly people living in the town and surrounding area.

Its purpose-built day centres in Park Street, Ruckland Court and Ashby Court offer a wide range of services, including a coffee bar, grocery shop, restaurant, hairdressers, chiropody, bathing, laundry, and a library.

Members can enjoy activities such as dancing, keep fit, painting, a drama club, bingo and language classes.

A fourth day centre is being built by the charity in North Hykeham. It is due to open next month.

LACE also rents out 155 homes to elderly people. The flats are attached to the charity's day centres and are designed for elderly people who want to live independently but need occasional help.

Residents live mainly in bed-sitting rooms. They have their own bathroom and kitchen and can use the day centre's services.

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Forward for community care

...n set up to give disabled people and their carers information, support, care and housing



(left), Karen McGinley and Grace Tinney enjoy some home

MARK MOUILLAN

The Weir Street development Coatbridge

Since opening its doors last April, the Weir Street housing development in Coatbridge, Strathclyde, has enabled 16 people with learning difficulties to live as independently as possible.

The integrated development is run by Key Housing, a resgistered housing association set up by the Scottish Society for the Mentally Handicapped in 1977 to provide accommodation for people who would otherwise have to stay in hospitals.

Funding comes from the Strathclyde regional council and the Glasgow health board, who are planning to fund similar Key developments in

Hamilton and East Kilbride.

The Coatbridge project, right in the town centre, consists of six single flats, four shared flats and an extra care house for people with profound learning difficulties and physical disabilities.

There are also flats and houses for eight able-bodied households selected by the council.

Varying levels of care and support are provided by a project leader, two deputies and 13 workers.

The four residents who live in the extra care house are provided with hoists, ramps, adjustable beds, and 24-hour care.

People in the other flats are encouraged to be more independent and have to be able to manage without workers for short periods.

The support for each person

is reviewed regularly and includes help with shopping, budgeting, cooking, cleaning, correspondence, and building social skills.

Home helps, community nurses, speech therapists and physiotherapists are also provided. Many of the tenants go to day centres. They are taken there by the Glasgow health board.

Project leader Rose McNamee said: "There has been a tremendous improvement in many of our people since they arrived last year.

"They are enjoying cooking and looking after themselves and have become much more assertive and independent."

Key Housing Association, Savoy Tower, 77 Renfrew Street, Glasgow 3BZ, tel: 041-332 6672.



ght: Valerie Duggan enjoys cooking fish and chips

Devon Disability Information and Advice Federation

Devon social services department has helped set up a disability information network through a charity called the Devon Disability Information and Advice Federation (DDIAF).

The project is one of 12 national pilot schemes selected by the Department of Health to promote better information for disabled people. It will receive funding of £100,000 from the department over three years to be spent on training volunteers, monitoring standards and improving networking arrangements.

DDIAF has four disability information services, in the north, south, east and west of the county. Two of them are funded directly by the council, while the others are contracted-out services.

Each service is staffed by a full-time co-ordinator, a part-time clerical worker and a team of volunteers.

Their job is to give disabled people and their carers information on a wide range of subjects, including benefits, assessments, equipment, motoring and accommodation.

Enquiries can be made by telephone, letter or in person. The help is free, impartial and confidential.

By linking each service to the council's mainframe computer, the social services department hope to create a comprehensive and up-to-date list of community care services that is available to disabled, people, their carers and professionals.

National databases, such as those run by the Disabled Living Foundation on equipment for disabled people in Europe, may also be brought into the system.

Devon county council's community care development officer Geoff King said: "We are asking the four disability information services in the county to constantly update any details they have on community care services and keep feeding them on to our computer.

"By sharing the latest information on a county-wide basis we will be able to provide disabled people and their carers with the best advice and, hopefully, make our task of co-ordinating and purchasing community care services easier."

The Devon Disability Information and Advice Federation, Ernest English House, Buckwell Street, Plymouth, PL1 2DA, tel: (0752) 665084.

...e aged over 55 who need
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...y's welfare officers deal with
health care and benefit
such as attendance allowance
phly bills, letter writing, and the

council tax.

They will also, if necessary, refer elderly people to doctors, social workers, day centres and health centres.

LACE vice-chairman Jim Bush said: "We have a good relationship with the council and I am sure that the partnership we have formed with them will help us to develop our day and visiting services further."

LACE, Park Street Day Centre, Park Street, Lincoln, Lincnshire, LN1 1UQ, tel: (0522) 527694.

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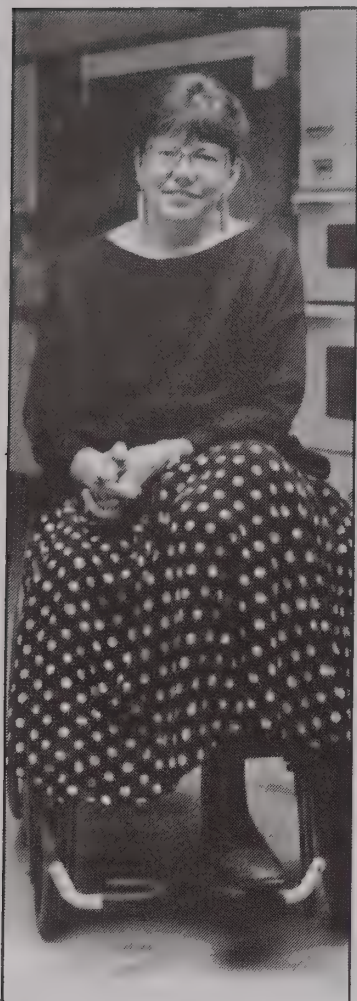
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Full and independent lives?

Jenny Morris asks whether community care will mean disabled people can live and participate fully in the community



JANE BOWN/COMMUNITY CARE

Dr Jenny Morris is a freelance researcher and consultant on disability issues. She has researched and written *Community Care or Independent Living?* £6.50 from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, The Homestead, 40 Water End, York YO3 6LT, tel: (0904) 629241.

I have just completed research about the experience of needing help with daily living activities which illustrates both the opportunities and the barriers created by community care policy. Some of the clearest messages came from the contrast between those who relied on statutory services and those able to purchase the help they required (using Independent Living Fund grants or payments from social services departments).

Exercising choice

People who employed their own helpers talked about what independent living means.

Patrick, who had spent many years in residential care, said: "It means exercising choice and control, having the right to choose who gets me up and who puts me to bed." And Maria explained: "I can get up in the morning when I want to, go to bed in the evening when I want to, go out when I want to."

Control over daily living spreads out into personal relationships and the role people play in the wider society. As Jack said: "I'm a husband, a father and a breadwinner. And ten years ago I was in an institution where I couldn't even decide when I would go to the toilet."

Lauren has brought up her son and works full-time because she has control over the help she needs. Moreover, this enables her to look after

her 80-year-old mother.

Opportunities are created for relationships and activities that non-disabled people take for granted. As Vicky said:

"Independent living means that I employ people and basically that they are here to do the physical things that I can't do ... I recently did this tape/slide show course and I was the only disabled person on it. I could only do it because I employed people."

Paying for help did not automatically mean that an individual had control over their lives. Professionals sometimes acted on behalf of the disabled person, making expensive arrangements with private agencies which undermined choice.

Contact with other disabled people who were employing their own helpers was vital - someone coming out of residential care after 30 years, or someone who has acquired an impairment, needs the support of others who have the same experience.

Inexperience preferred

Those who had employed personal assistants for a number of years said the experience gave them confidence in their own judgements when recruiting people.

It was quite common to prefer helpers to have no qualifications or experience. As Moira, married to a disabled man, said: "Now, well, we feel that the less experience they have the better, 'cos, you know, we know what needs doing, they don't need to know, they just need to be told. And you find that if they are qualified or have done this kind of work before, especially if they've worked in a home, that they expect to do things in a certain way. And that way will probably not suit us."

In contrast to the control

that employing helpers brought, most people found that statutory services were not flexible enough to enable them to make the most elementary choices, such as when to get up or when to go to the toilet.

Increasingly, statutory services will only help with the most basic personal care tasks.

People found it difficult to get help with housework and almost impossible to get help to go out. As Valerie said: "I think the community care philosophy doesn't understand what independent living is ... They seem to think that community care is about

discussions amongst professionals without the words "and their carers". Reliance on a family member restricts the autonomy of both parties to the relationship. At its worst it can result in emotional and physical abuse.

An expression of love?

I interviewed people for whom receiving help within a relationship was an expression of love; but I also interviewed those whose isolation and powerlessness resulted in serious abuse. The majority who received help within a personal relationship were struggling to get enough help from other sources in order to protect their loving relationship.

One woman summed it up: "If there's quite a good balance in my life in terms of getting support and being able to do things in different ways and in different environments ... then it's really lovely to have Ros doing things for me because it's part of a loving relationship."

"But when it goes out of balance and it seems to be only Ros, it's absolutely dreadful and you lose sight of the fact that we're lovers and that we're individuals, and that we do actually love each other, because there's no space for it left."

Having control over help with daily living tasks means that disabled people can take their place as citizens, participating in society and in personal relationships in a way that non-disabled people take for granted.

Unless it continues to be possible for disabled people to receive money to pay for personal assistance, and they receive independent advice about how to use this money effectively, their opportunities to be independent citizens will disappear.

"Having control over help with daily living tasks means that disabled people can take their place as citizens, participating in society and in personal relationships"

someone being cosy and comfortable, being kept clean. To me that's a step back into the situation of residential care - living in the contained environment of your own home."

District nurses seemed to have little role in enabling people to live independently. In fact, it was often through finding other sources to help with, for example, bowel management, that people were able to organise their lives in a way which suited them.

All this meant that to be dependent on statutory services confined someone to their own home. Even within their own home they could not receive help to play an equal role within their household, as a parent or partner.

The term, "disabled people" rarely appears these days in

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How to get the best education for your disabled child

Parent and solicitor Jill Bolton guides other parents through the maze

Local authorities are under a duty to identify a child with special educational needs.

If your child is having difficulties with school work, speak first to their teacher so that the problems can be approached in practical ways. Special education programmes must be tailored to how your child learns, not vice versa.

If you think your child is falling behind others of a similar age, you have the right to ask your Local Education Authority (LEA) to arrange a full assessment of your child's special educational needs. The LEA must meet your request (unless it is unreasonable), keep you informed and allow you to offer your views.

The aim is to place special needs children in ordinary schools, which is excellent in theory, since stimulation by their peers is important.

But some children with special educational needs will not be able to function in an ordinary school. A child who never receives positive reinforcement at school is a child who will not achieve his/her potential.

LEAs tend to say: "This is the provision we have available - now tell us why this is not reasonable". You will be advised about the "proper" education for your child.

It may seem that the LEA makes arbitrary, bureaucratic decisions about placement. This can be frustrating, but is not intentional. It is more a matter of interpreting reports differently and the LEA taking an objective view.

There are two "categories" of children with special educational needs: those for whom the LEA prepares a statement of needs and makes appropriate provision, and those who are not statemented. Responsibility for special provision for unstatemented children falls on the school, which must still meet the child's needs.

You can appeal against a refusal to prepare a statement, but it takes time.

Where the LEA makes a statement, parents should submit their child's difficulties in writing enclosing, if possible, a copy of a report from an independent educational psychologist supporting your understanding of your child's needs.

Failure to make this

submission implies disinterest if the matter goes to appeal. So it is important to do this, even if you do not enclose a psychologist's report.

If your child's carers have told you that a particular school would benefit your child, you must take additional steps to show why the LEA should consider this provision:

- * visit other schools which may be considered by the LEA
- * at each school, take note of class sizes, the number of children with special needs and the provision made for them
- * ask the head teacher about in-service training programmes
- * talk to the head of special educational needs
- * visit a classroom and watch a class in session
- * visit the physio department
- * assess how appropriate the



PATRICK BAGLEE

school's building and layout is

- * try to gauge the sympathy of staff to special needs children already there.

Include the information in your written comments about your child's needs.

The LEA will gather evidence from the child's teachers, physiotherapists, doctors and, most importantly, from its own educational psychologist. A formal assessment should be completed in six months.

The LEA will then prepare a five-part draft Statement of Special Educational Needs:

- 1 Child's and parents' names
- 2 The nature of the child's special educational needs, *which should be very detailed*
- 3 The special educational provision the LEA intends to make to meet the child's needs, identified earlier. (If the needs were not detailed, the LEA need not make provision for them, so it is important when you receive the draft statement to ensure that the proposed provision reflects the needs as listed.)
- 4 The type of school the LEA has decided is appropriate for your child, with its name.

5 Other non-educational provision required by the child, such as physiotherapy and transport to school. The LEA must provide them or arrange for district health authorities to provide them.

Attached to the statement should be copies of all professional advice obtained during the assessment.

You have 15 days to respond. If you agree with the proposed provision, sign it and return it with your comments.

If you do not agree, *do not sign it*. Now is the time to obtain advice on how to proceed, for example, by obtaining a report from an independent educational psychologist.

Most LEAs will extend the time for comment so that parents can gather extra information. Besides obtaining an independent report, it is important to visit the school nominated by the statement. (The LEA need not make the "best" provision of education for your child, only "reasonable" provision.)

Send your views on the nominated school and the report to the LEA. It may help to request a meeting to iron out what is "reasonable" provision. Ask the independent psychologist to attend to represent you and your child. The child should not attend.

If you cannot afford an educational psychologist, you may be eligible for Green Form legal advice and assistance. Be sure the solicitor you instruct is familiar with the relevant law. Many voluntary organisations can advise and provide someone to represent you.

If the disagreement is not resolved, you have the right of appeal to a local appeal committee and, if necessary, to the Secretary of State for Education. You can also apply to the High Court for a judicial review.

The Education Act 1981 contains most of the law for special educational needs, supplemented by various circulars from the Department of Education and Science, particularly number 22/89.

The Education Bill going through Parliament now amends the 1981 Education Act and puts strict deadlines on LEAs. Regional tribunals, replacing local appeal systems, will have the power to instruct



It took six months for Jill Bolton to agree a school for her son Sean, 11, who has cp. "Don't let the law intimidate you," she says. "Fight hard but, more importantly, fight smart."

LEAs to change statements if parents appeal successfully.

Welcome as these changes are, they do not go far enough. "Special needs" must be defined. Do they relate to education in its purest sense, or if a physical disability impairs ability to function in ordinary school, should this be included? I think it should.

The Children's Act 1989 imposes a basic principle - "the interests of the child are paramount". Unfortunately, it does not apply to the provision of special education.

The gap between children with and without special needs gets wider as these children get older. Special needs children can easily become isolated.

Integration into main stream schooling is a good ideal but it must ensure that all the child's needs are addressed.

ELA (Education Law Association), tel: 071-354 8318. IPSEA (Independent Panel for Special Educational Advice), tel: (0621) 779781.

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education), tel: 071-354 8321. *Children with Special Needs - Caught in the Act*, by Harry Chasty and John Friel, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, £14. Clear and concise on the law.

Jill Bolton is a solicitor with Lyons Davidson in Bristol, specialising in medical negligence, litigation and special educational law.

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Marie's Voice

by Michelle Daly
(Wolfhound Press, 68 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1, £6.99)

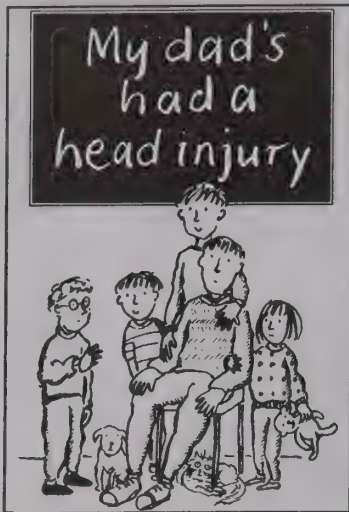
To Confound the Wise: Learning From Those Called "Handicapped"

by David McCann
(Darton, Longman and Todd, 89 Lillie Road, London SW6 1UD, £6.95)

When she first met Marie in 1970, Michelle Daly was 17 and starting work in a Bristol children's home. Marie, mentally and physically disabled, was five and had been there since she was six weeks old.

Michelle was immediately drawn to the lonely, frustrated little girl. They became very attached to each other and Marie was allowed to visit Michelle at home. When Marie was eight, Michelle obtained legal guardianship: the youngest single woman in Britain ever to do so.

But *Marie's Voice* is not a happy-ever-after story. Despite



My Dad's had a Head Injury by Katie Field, a book for older children. Headway National Head Injuries Association, 7 King Edward Court, King Edward Street, Nottingham NG1 1EW, £2.50.

experience working with disabled children, including fostering, Michelle was labelled a difficult parent.

In this unsentimental book, she admits to being outspoken and describes many conflicts with experts. Her main concern was for Marie and her two other children and the desire to keep her family safe, happy and together.

Regrettably, many of her experiences ring true. She had to face the idea that children must force-fit the available resources. Also, given the single-minded dedication demanded by the children, Michelle's own relationships suffered.

Michelle moved to Ireland in 1989, and "found people who really cared for Marie". Marie, now 27, lives in a home in County Mayo, which meets Michelle's high standards.

Marie's Voice is a compelling description of love, trial and achievement.

In contrast to Michelle, David McCann, "a middle-aged Catholic priest", has much learning. Yet in *To Confound the Wise*, he describes how contact with people with learning disabilities was a revelation to him. It affected his whole outlook, stripping away pretensions and preconceptions.

Through the stories of several young people, he describes how he learnt from them about communication and the significance of personal relationships. His view of worship and faith also took on a new dimension.

The book is written from a personal, religious standpoint, but contains reflections of significance to us all.

Joan Shannon

Gardening - Equipment for Disabled People

by David Hollinrake
(Disability Information Trust, Mary Marlborough Lodge, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Oxford OX3 7LD, £11.50)

Produced in association with the Royal Horticultural Society, the second edition of this guide offers a wealth of ideas for making gardening easier and more accessible.

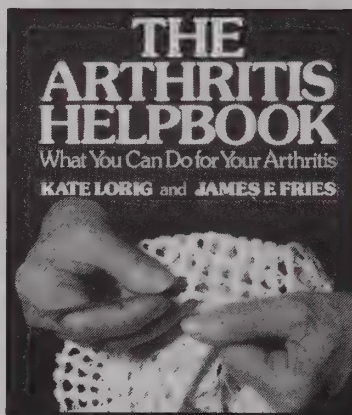
Even the most practised gardener may find something of interest among the many pieces of equipment designed for every aspect of gardening. Most of it has been professionally tested with the help of people with disabilities.

There is an explanation in each chapter of why and how basic gardening tasks are done and a selection of possible tools to tackle the work.

Photographs illustrate the tools along with clear descriptions, including dimensions, weight and price. Guidance is given on each item, but the book recommends that tools be tried out before purchase.

Bridging the Gap is a useful chapter. It looks at ways of reducing the strain of reaching down to soil level.

The guide includes sources of further help, a bibliography and manufacturers' addresses.



The Arthritis Helpbook by Kate Lorig and James Fries has been reissued after selling out last year. Souvenir Press, 43 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PA, £8.99.

£11.50 might seem expensive, but the book does reflect a great deal of research, carries useful information, and should help you to make a reasoned choice.

Some of the photographs could have been clearer, and a few technical descriptions might have been better illustrated, but this is an excellent guide.

Val George

TAPES

Meditate with Me 1&2 Relax You're a Woman Relax You're a Man

(Heart International, 20 Paul Street, Frome, Somerset BA11 1DX, £8.95 each)

Stress can have a negative effect on the body and meditation is one of the many methods used for relaxation.

Stacey Elizabeth Jefferson, a member of the National Federation of Spiritualist Healers, has recorded these four audio tapes.

Each has calming words and gentle music. Ms Jefferson uses guided meditations, about 20 minutes long, to help you relax and let go of stress.

Relax You're A Man emphasises feelings and trust. *Relax You're A Woman* concentrates on empowerment and giving to yourself. Both draw on imagery from nature and the elements; perfect for relaxing at the end of the day.

I felt a lot of resistance on first listening, but it gets easier. Meditation is a skill you need to practice. The important thing is to let yourself listen to your feelings. Ms Jefferson says "the feelings inside may be affecting our bodies". If we can get to our feelings, we can allow them to flow out, where they cannot damage the body.

The tapes have a spiritual approach which may put some people off, but I don't think you have to believe to benefit. You simply need to concentrate and be willing to spend time on yourself.

Tracy Scollin

EAGLE

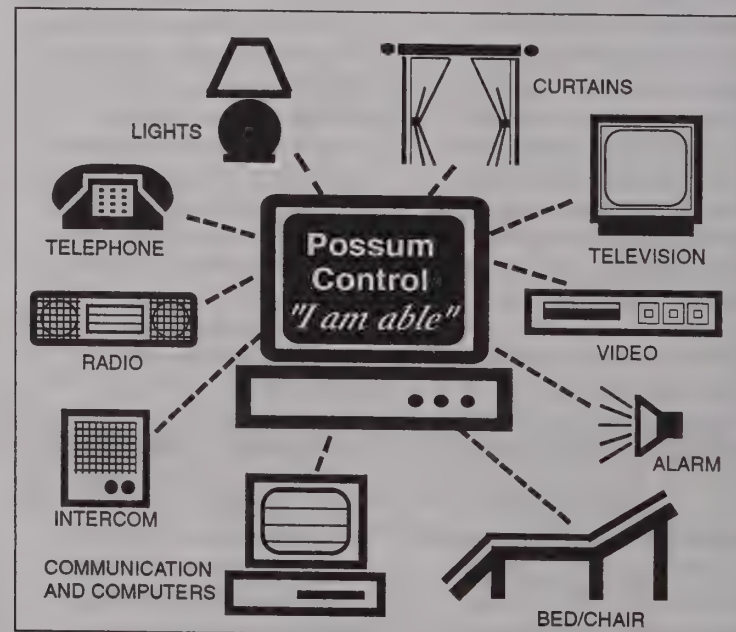
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THEATRE

Gateway Festival '93

Festival '93 in March was the finale to thirteen regional festivals organised by MENCAP Gateway clubs. Sixteen groups were chosen from 750 clubs across the country.

The Festival is not just an opportunity to present the talents of people with learning disabilities. It is a prestigious occasion, attracting guests such as Norma Major, that raises the profile of Mencap. There was even a message from the Queen in the programme.

The performers played to a capacity house of nearly 3,000 fans in the plush setting of London's Royal Festival Hall. The venue's size did not seem to prevent anyone from lapping up the spotlight and applause that the fans gave out in great measure.

The best of a mixed bunch of acts were those that really understood their content and were not just being guided through the motions by an able-bodied worker.

"Move Over" by the Grove Club from Yorkshire & Humberside, was an extremely

simple but very well presented sketch that was funny and visually impressive. Lee Thomas, a young singer

from the Cynon Valley, performed with the maturity of his idol Tom Jones. He has recorded several cassettes for

charity but has the potential to do much more. Certainly a performer to watch out for.

Compere Tony Keyho, who has staged the show for the last seven years, introduced the performers as though they were old friends. For those of us who didn't know "Sue" or why she was sick, this became rather irritating. There was also an element of pantomime banter that the crowd started to weary of towards the interval.

The show would have benefited from a theme which linked the material and focused the performers; it was asking too much of the audience to appreciate a rendition of "The Snowman" followed by a piece of Kabuki (Japanese theatre).

The Russians were there too, performing gymnastics with great flair and being ably supported by young people from Bromley.

And, just to round the occasion off, I sat opposite Norma Major. What more could a roving reporter ask for?

Ashley Grey



The Beacon Gateway Club, London, perform Kabuki

SARAH WORKER

TV



Chris Davies

Just after it started its current run, I praised *Advice Shop* for having a disabled presenter who would encourage other disabled people to claim their rights. That same presenter, Andrew Miller, has just been abseiling for charity after asking for viewers to sponsor him (BBC2, 4 March). Never has the rights not charity issue been so combined in one programme!

To investigate the "community care" on offer to people with schizophrenia, a reporter for *Disguises* (ITV, 25 Feb & 4 March) went undercover, adopting the mannerisms of mental illness. Though the result was powerful television, it smacks of the old "sit in a wheelchair, and you are disabled" syndrome. A bit dubious.

So was the hour-long opening episode of a comedy drama series *September Song* (ITV, 1 March). The continuing storyline involves two friends, an ex-school teacher and a seedy comedian. When the comedian gets a chance to rejuvenate his career, the friends go to Blackpool for the season.

But when the programme starts, the teacher (played by Russ Abbot), has a steady job and a wife, Sarah. The job obstacle is overcome by taking voluntary redundancy, and the wife obstacle by Sarah dying, apparently as a result of severe multiple sclerosis. (I say "apparently", because MS wasn't actually mentioned in the script, but the MS Society's assistance was acknowledged in the credits.)

Needless to say, Sarah was portrayed by a non-disabled actress. Why couldn't she die of a heart attack, rather than underlining the more negative aspects of disability?

As I write, *From the Edge* is 11 programmes old. Most of the output has been aggressively "youth-orientated" with an air of designer shoddiness.

However, *Handicapped History* (BBC2, 4 March), was a masterpiece. Written and presented by David Hevey, it was an 11-minute, witty and imaginative digest of the history of the British disability movement and civil rights struggle.

Congratulations to David, co-presenter Elspeth Morrison, and producer Libby Cross.

Handicapped History should be extended into a whole programme, with additional eye witness accounts from people representing different decades.

Look out for

Audio-described performances of JM Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows*. 8 and 10 April. Perth Theatre, Scotland. Tel: (0738) 21031.

Viva! Eight, highlights of the NME Town and Country Club concerts in aid of the Spastics Society. CD £9.99, cassette £7.99. From record shops.

CS; closed subtitles, S: subtitles, NS: no subtitles

1. LETHAL WEAPON 3 (Warner Video) More wacky comedy action from Mel Gibson. (CS)

2. ALIEN 3 (Fox) The Alien runs riot once more on a penal space colony. (CS)

VIDEO

3. BEETHOVEN (CIC) Likeable shaggy dog comedy for kids. (CS)

4. UNIVERSAL SOLDIER (Guild) Futuristic fighting pic

starring musclemen Van Damme and Lundgren. (CS)

5. SLEEPWALKERS (Columbia Tristar) Unspectacular adaptation of a Stephen King short story. (NS)

Andy Kimpton-Nye

Chart courtesy of MRIB

FILM



Andy Kimpton-Nye

Lorenzo's Oil

Lorenzo's Oil (12) is an admirably well-crafted tale of a couple's almost mythic struggle to save their son's life. It has a strong central performance from Oscar-nominee Susan Sarandon as the mother, Michaela Odone, and is a perfect example of "entertainment cinema" doing what it does best - milking the emotions for all they're worth.

Having said that, the end product plays like an expensive, two-hour advert for *Children in Need*.

The Odone family are merrily going about their business without too many cares until, one day, five-year-old Lorenzo (Zack O'Malley Greenberg) inexplicably starts

to behave badly at school. He develops problems with his speech, hearing and balance, and is diagnosed as having Adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD). He is given two years to live.

This is the cue for mum and dad to embark on an odyssey, taking on the might of the medical profession, scientists and a charity, in search of a magical cure.

Despite the best intentions of director and co-writer George (Mad Max) Miller, the young disabled character is served up as a pathetic, pitiable figure so that the audience can appreciate the heroic endeavours of the parents. At the same time, young Lorenzo develops into a version of the silver screen "Super Crip", showing a marvellous, almost magical, will to survive.

The film is too busy building these images to do any detailed study of the other issues: like why the medical profession and the support group were so unhelpful for so long, and why the US government was so slow to fund research. That's the emotive Hollywood experience I'm waiting for.

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Race, rally or kart your way round Silverstone and other tracks. Mike Rogers explains how

In 1991 the RAC Motor Sports Association (RACMSA) - the UK's governing body - reversed a ban on competition driving by people with disabilities. Now the field is open to many drivers, using adapted controls if they need to.

Thanks to the British Motor Sports Association for the Disabled (BMSAD), which helped bring about the change of heart, able-bodied and disabled people can challenge each other on equal terms.

BMSAD members have competed in national and international events.

In 1991, Dick Archer, driving with no fingers after a severe burns accident, led his class for a time in the RAC Lombard Rally. Last year, having climbed to 41st place overall in the Rally, he was again leading his class when a mechanical problem put him out.

Also last year, David Butler, a triple amputee, attained sixth place overall by mid-summer in the MG Championship series and is competing again this year.

Drivers who take part have many different disabilities, including MS, paraplegia, diabetes and visual impairment.

One BMSAD member, Geoff Garside, an aerospace engineer with MS from Lancashire, has a different aim. He's out to beat the world motorcycle landspeed record. That means attaining 425 mph on salt lake flats in Australia.

He has already secured technical assistance from the Lotus Car Company for the special vehicle he needs, and from the Cranfield Institute of Technology. Now he is looking for major sponsorship to go ahead with Project 425. The

sum required? £500,000.

So how do you get into this challenging field of sport?

Joining BMSAD opens the door to assessment by John Watson's racing school at the Silverstone circuit in Northamptonshire. There is also a medical assessment by the RACMSA. Both are necessary to ensure circuit



Getting assessed for circuit racing: triple amputee David Butler at John Watson's racing school, Silverstone MIKE ROGERS

safety.

Days are set aside at other race and rally schools too, where BMSAD members can try out their skills on modified vehicles.

Is it all expensive? Membership of BMSAD is only £10 for a year. But going through the RACMSA competition licence requirements costs £150 - whether you are able-bodied or disabled.

Once into competition, as you would expect, the real expense starts. One reason for the price of the RAC competition licence application is to dissuade those with little serious intent. But BMSAD members show no shortage of enthusiasm - taking part

their adapted competition vehicles, members can take part in any type of motor sport



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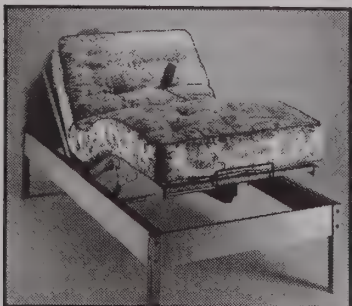
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Pat Robins shows there is no need for your gardening days to be over just because you cannot see properly

Gardening can have therapeutic benefits as well as being a pleasant hobby for visually impaired people. I have discovered several ways of overcoming problems caused by lack of sight so that gardening can still be enjoyable.

For the active blind person, gardening can be healthy exercise as well as a help with the household budget when vegetables begin to grow. Frail, multi-disabled or elderly visually impaired people may get pleasure from gardening in tubs and window boxes or from growing indoor plants.

The garden may need replanning so that someone with a visual impairment can continue to work in it. Our front flower garden proved a problem after I became registered blind. There were no proper paths through it or places for guiding handrails. I found that I could not get to some parts to care for the plants without damaging things, including myself!

I solved this difficulty by planting flowering shrubs - including many scented ones - and small ornamental trees in the areas I could not get to. This reduced a lot of the work.

My husband made a fish pond in the middle of one side of the garden and paved out the area around it.

I wanted to continue growing annual flowers from seed, so I bought garden tubs of various shapes and sizes and placed them on the paved area around the pond. Each year I fill them with bulbs to flower in the spring and then, when these are over, I plant them out with the many flowers I grow from seed in trays.

As a visually impaired gardener, you have to learn

how to avoid accidents. I have found that careful planning of the layout of my garden makes it easier for me to move about freely and safely.

Once a garden has been

texture of their leaves and flowers. I also feel for and separate seedlings. I rarely wear gardening gloves. By using a hand cream after gardening sessions my hands

easier for me when eventually planting them into their permanent place in the garden or tub.

When I first became visually impaired, I could not see to

useful is *Gardening Without Sight* by Kathleen Fleet who is herself blind. The booklet gives information on many things, from how to mow the lawn to weeding, planting, planning a garden and suitable gardening tools. It also advises on useful, simple aids and in some cases gives instructions on how to make them. All aspects of gardening are covered, from indoor plants to vegetables, flowers and shrubs.

There are various aids and special tools which will help the visually impaired gardener. Many of these are quite simple and most have been designed by other visually impaired people. Information can be obtained from the Advisory Committee for Blind Gardeners (ACBG).

Other helpful leaflets and advice are available from Horticultural Therapy.

Our garden, replanned because of my loss of sight, is now even more colourful and scented than it was before and much easier to care for.



Flowering and scented shrubs need less care so they are good for out-of-the-way places

DOUGLAS ROBINS

properly planned and any obviously dangerous obstacles removed, there is little more risk of accidents for the careful visually impaired gardener than for the sighted one.

If I do need to use canes or sticks to prop up plants or for them to grow up, I make sure that the top of the canes are covered with a protective material so I do not injure myself. As a further safety measure, I grow plants that will need support against a wall or fence rather than in the middle of my garden.

I have found I can continue growing things by making full use of my sense of touch. I use my fingers to identify different plants by feeling the shape and

and fingers are kept supple for other "feeling" jobs.

When growing flowers from seed in our greenhouse, I have found it easier to get a more even spread of seeds in the trays if I use a seed sower.

I still have a little sight and, when seeds are very small and almost transparent, I mix them with some fine sand before planting them. The sand shows up against the dark compost and I can trace where the seeds are in the tray.

When the seedlings are big enough to need transplanting, I use my fingers to separate them and then plant them individually into yoghurt or similar pots which I save for that purpose. This makes it

judge how much water I was using on my seedlings, so I tended to over water them. To prevent this, I now use a plastic sprayer. I use one hand to feel for the seedling, the other hand to spray it, check it is moist enough and pass on to the next pot.

A booklet I have found very

Gardening Without Sight £2.50 (inc p&pp) from RNIB

Customer Services, PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS, tel: (0345) 023153. Available in print, braille or on tape.

ACBG, Goulds Ground, Vallis Way, Frome, Somerset, BA11 3DW, tel: (0373) 467072. Horticultural Therapy (same address as ACBG), tel: (0373) 464782.

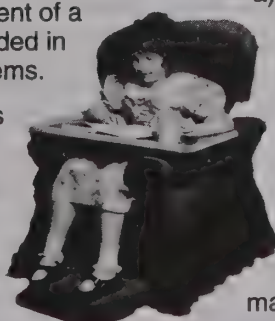
See also book review page 20, and Checkout page 26.

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Mrs Valerie Wenham, The National Trust, Dept DN, 36 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AS.

Share Your Problems

with Ann Darnbrough

When labelling others is no laughing matter



Enablers, carers, aiders, facilitators - all names for people who help those of us with disabilities who need assistance in our everyday lives. But what a rumpus goes on about exactly which label to use.

I'm inclined to think that's no bad thing. It shows we are concerned with the sensitivities of each other and believe our choice of words reflects this.

There are many jokes made about the "politically correct" use of language. People laugh about the "circumferentially challenged" and "follically challenged" but is it funny to call someone "mentally retarded"? Of course not - it's offensive and is being banished from the English language.

But James (not his real name), who describes himself as a "carer of a disabled daughter", takes issue with those who don't like the use of the word "carer".

Some people like his daughter, he says, are so profoundly disabled that they cannot survive without constant attention. "I don't in the least mind being called a

carer - what I do object to is the lack of recognition that goes with the job."

My own pet hates include "educationally challenged", with its implication that there is the potential for everyone to meet the challenge - and the equally implied failure if they don't or can't succeed.

Help refused

Another view of carers is provided by a reader I will call Liz. She said: "As a former social worker (and now disabled), I often found that it was carers who could be negative and unwilling to accept the practical help and advice on offer from relatives."

"Some refused contact with the disabled person, making decisions for them, thus making them even more dependent. In spite of a sitting service, many insisted that their person would not like to be with a stranger."

"Some carers adopt a very possessive role and the disabled person gradually loses a sense of identity. I am getting rather tired and angry at always being presented as a burden. To be informed that I

will eventually cause ill health to my loved ones does little for my already low self-esteem.

"Please listen to us sometimes and allow us some choice of what kind of care we want. Some carers could be very surprised!"

Creating a stir

Do you remember the stir caused by Sally when she wrote about the disability movement's "militant tendency" and described them as "wheelchair whingers" (DN, January)?

This touched a chord with Mary, who wrote: "At last someone brave enough to point out the damage and annoyance caused by 'wheelchair whingers'. How is it possible for wheelchair users to represent the majority of disabled people, when in fact they are a small proportion of the disability world?"

"The only time I feel ashamed to have the label 'disabled' is when witnessing the militant element on the media or when reading some of the disability magazines. Sally, you are a courageous lass. What a pity more people do not have the confidence or the guts to say what they really feel instead of smiling sweetly because you cannot criticise disabled people."

"Rubbish - take off the kid gloves, be honest and tell disabled people when they are being unreasonable."

Jonathon Edmans wrote in to "put the other side to Sally". He said: "Sally is correct in her idea of everyone having a say, however, until

quite recently many able-bodied 'experts' and charities for disabled people run by the able-bodied put forward ideas and thoughts on behalf of the disabled, without consulting impaired people themselves, as they were seen to be irrelevant. Consequently, disabled people were invisible and not heard. Now the disability movement has a voice and it will be used.

"Regarding charities, most charities do good work. But charities for the disabled have

wondered why they do not?

"Now, apart from those who are too severely impaired, could it not be true that carers and disability 'experts' have complete control over the lives of impaired people and have convinced these individuals that they are not going to control their own lives?"

"Then there is the aspect of confrontation. This has come about because many disabled people, I believe, have not had control over their own."

"Consequently these 'wheelchair whingers', like any newly independent country, do not want to give up their new-found independence. This phase will not last. Once there is a general acceptance from the able-bodied that we as impaired people can control our own lives, then we can have co-operation."

"Without ideology there can be no advance on this subject. After all, is not that what ideology is all about - a set of ideas or beliefs held by a certain group of people or organisations. Without ideas or thoughts like Sally's and mine surely there can be no debate, as there were no ideas in the first place to debate on!"

Readers who want to follow up similar views to those expressed by Jonathon may be interested in joining the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People (BCODP).

I welcome views on any subjects, as well as shared concerns and interests which particularly affect disabled people. I look forward to hearing from you.

BCODP, De Bradelei House, Chapel Street, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 1AR, tel: (0773) 828182.

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Lin Berwick, DN's telephone counsellor, herself disabled,

can give other disabled people and their carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Talk to her on Monday afternoons, 1pm-5pm and Thursdays 6pm-10pm. Her telephone number is (0708) 477582.

DN's helpline is sponsored by The Wellcome Foundation Limited.

been guilty of creating an image of disability to raise funds which can do severe damage to the self-image of an individual with an impairment. The able-bodied public is given a wrong idea of what impaired people are about.

"Sally also points out the idea of self-determination and says that most people with impairments may not wish to share this ideal. I would like to ask Sally if she has ever

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Don't write disabled journalists off

Claire Meade has been visiting *DN* for some work experience. Fresh from a training course that she fought to get on to, she uncovers the story that the newspapers don't want you to read all about - discrimination in journalism

"I had mentioned my disability when I applied to train as a journalist, you probably wouldn't be reading this now."

To much surprise, I walked into the interview at Harlow College in Essex using sticks. After arguing that my disability made no difference to my ability as a journalist, I became the first disabled student to get on to Harlow's National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) course.

Had I revealed my disability, (as was later told), I wouldn't have got as far as the interview. Few people would argue that journalism is a competitive profession. But far too many would-be hacks with disabilities are being written-off unfairly.

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) set up the Opportunities in Journalism scheme in 1990 to try and help. Each year, RADAR awards three grants to disabled people who want to do a full-time NCTJ approved training course.*

Aside from money, one of the biggest problems is access. RADAR scheme co-ordinator Caroline Gooding points out: "There is no access for wheelchair users to either course buildings or accommodation at a fifth of the places offering the NCTJ scheme."

At Harlow, journalism is the only major department with no access for wheelchair users. The improved access I argued

If you clear the money and the access hurdles, you then have to deal with the attitudes of other journalists and the

is still unemployed, turned down by editors because we "give a wrong image" or "won't be taken seriously".

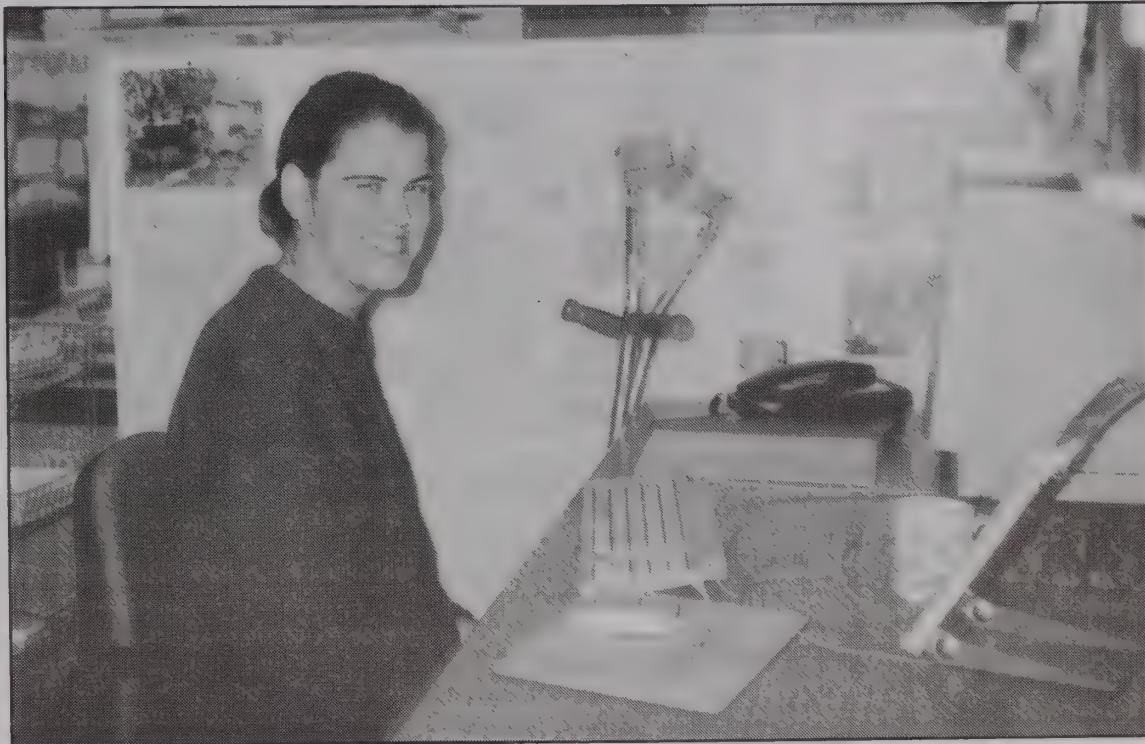
send a photograph to editors to show I looked 'normal'."

Margaret Dove, NCTJ pre-entry secretary, denies disabled people are put at a disadvantage. "The NCTJ welcomes trainees with disabilities, which is why we support the RADAR scheme. If applicants are felt able to cope with the college and right for the course, they will be offered a place."

RADAR is trying to convince editors that shorthand alone doesn't make a good journalist. Richard Bowen proves it. When he applied to train at Stradbroke College in Sheffield in 1990, the NCTJ told him that to get a place he had to have a job to go to when the course ended. This wasn't asked of any other applicants. He did just that, and now works for Manchester's *Sale and Altrincham Messenger*.

"Cerebral palsy means I can't write longhand, let alone shorthand, so I use a tape-recorder. Shorthand doesn't make a good journalist, it's the ability, not disability that counts. And it's time editors and the NCTJ realised that."

**For more information on the scheme, contact Caroline Gooding, RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB, tel: 071-637 5400.*



Claire at *DN*: "Too many hacks with disabilities are being written off unfairly"

TRACY SCOLLIN

for still hasn't happened.

Newcastle journalist Jennifer Brown did a one-year NCTJ course at Darlington College, County Durham, in 1990.

"I went to Darlington on the understanding it was accessible. Although my cerebral palsy doesn't prevent me walking, my balance isn't great. I was angry to find myself facing a steep slope and steps to get into the Victorian journalism building."

demands set by the NCTJ.

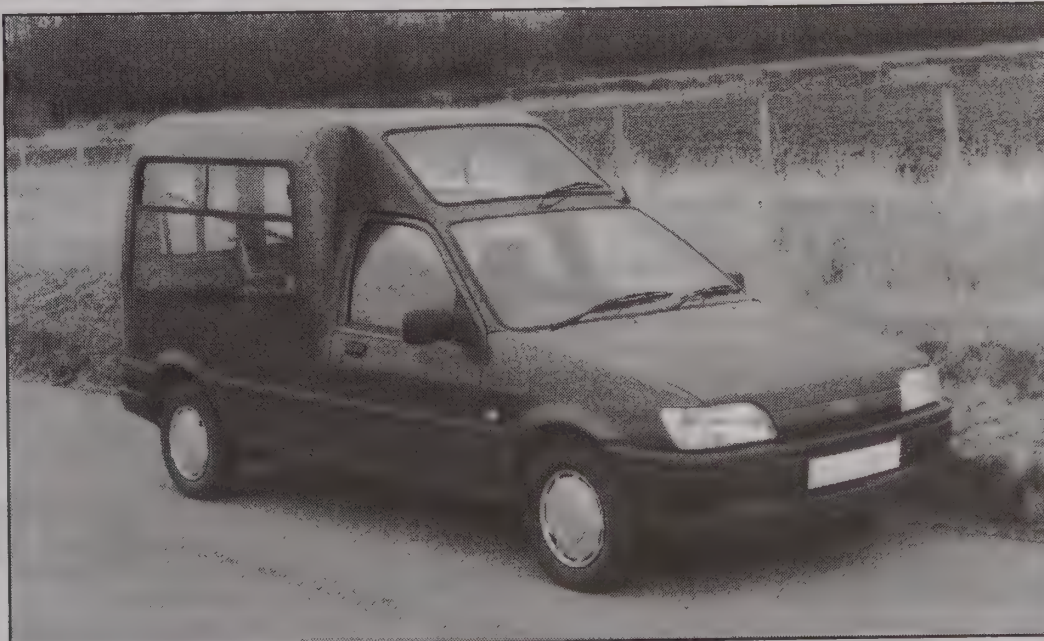
The lecturers at Harlow were great, and some said my doing the course had changed their attitudes. Yet even now, head of journalism Jenny Andrews says: "Most disabled people just couldn't cope with the course here, the 'doing' side of journalism."

Like myself, Jennifer Brown

Lack of short-term memory meant Jennifer found it impossible to do shorthand. Under NCTJ rules, that meant she couldn't get her qualifying certificate.

"Editors write to say that without shorthand they won't consider employing me. But I think that's an excuse. One news agency even suggested I

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Sowing and growing the easy way

Winter is only just behind us so the garden is probably the last thing on your mind. But if you want to be the envy of your neighbours, you'll have to start planning very soon.

This month Checkout looks at gardening equipment for people with mobility problems.

If you think that tending and creating a garden will be too much trouble why not try some of these ideas? You might be surprised how easy it is.

Keep your tools within easy reach with the **Garden Pouch** from Draper Tools. It is like an apron with a lot of pockets. Small tools can be carried round the garden so you don't

be carried in a bag.

Different manufacturers have different methods of attaching the head to the handle. Some are easier to fit than others, so check which is most suitable for you.

The **Combisystem Trowel** (below left) costs £7, the long handle is £6 from Gardena (UK), tel (0462) 686688.

The **Easy Gardener** is a modular, raised garden in treated timber, designed for people with bad backs, mobility problems of those who use wheelchairs. The height can be adjusted up and down 11in, so it can be put together to suit your needs.

You can garden in comfort whether you are standing or sitting. One module, the "Columbine", slopes down at the back so you can grow smaller rooted flowers or vegetables at the front and larger rooted plants in the greater depth at the back. There is space to get your wheelchair underneath the shallow end so you can reach further.

Modules can be bought separately and built up over the years. One advantage is the compact construction, which makes the Easy Gardener ideal where space is limited in small gardens, conservatories, patios or balconies.

It comes with a range of accessories including a potting bench, mini greenhouse, hanging basket support, trellis and cold frame. Plant now and in the summer you can have a glorious show of spring bulbs or a vivid summer display.

David Hollinrake, horticultural therapist at Mary Marlborough Lodge thinks the Easy Gardener "is well made and

vellous as I can get completely round it and reach every plant. I would recommend it to anyone who needs to use a

the edge or in the set of five swivel trays branching out from the central support. It is easy to install and move about.

It is also energy efficient. The conical, glazed canopy is angled to pick up maximum solar energy on cold days. Plants are protected in hot weather because cool air is drawn in at the base and unwanted heat is sent out through the top ventilator.

Available in two sizes, from £374 (inc p&p and VAT). Tel: (0252) 795279.

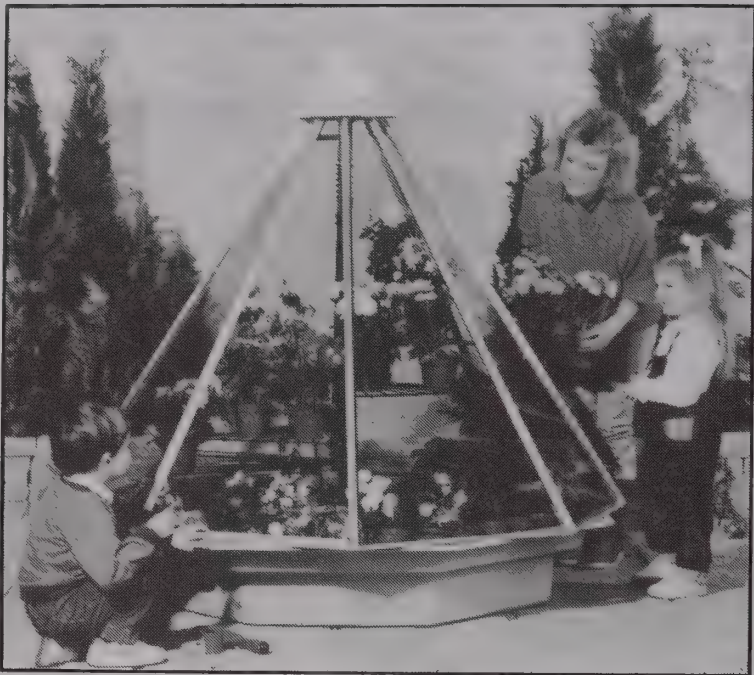
Tracy Scollin



Try long handled tools
DISABILITY INFORMATION TRUST

need to keep getting up and down. £8. Tel: (0703) 266355.

Try tools with interchangeable handles and heads to avoid unnecessary bending. One handle can be used with a variety of tool heads. Spare heads can



The GrowMate, 13 square feet of growing area

thoughtfully designed".

But it does not come ready-assembled so you may need help to set it up.

Basic Module £143.71, Columbine module £167.80. Tel (04353) 3634.

The **GrowMate** (above) can be a greenhouse, cloche or herb garden, and adapts for hydroponics (soilless culture).

The rotating design makes it easy to reach any part of the growing area, even from a wheelchair.

Wheelchair user Dorothy Roberts from Warmsworth, Doncaster, has one and says: "I find that the GrowMate is mar-

wheelchair.

"It is easy to place it in a position which is slightly elevated from the floor if the person in the wheelchair finds it not quite high enough.

"In the past I have not been able to get into the greenhouse to reach my cactus collection. Now they are all safely within my Growmate and in fact are flowering better than they have ever done."

The GrowMate does not take up much room yet it gives you over 13 square feet of growing area. This is because plants can be grown either in the base, in containers around

Chelsea Flower Show '93 is on from 25-28 May. Tickets in advance only. £6-£16. Credit card hotline 071-379 4443.

Horticultural Therapy (HT) celebrates its 15th birthday this year by running the first UK course leading to a professional qualification in therapeutic horticulture. It lasts one year on a day-release basis. HT also runs two flower shows for gardeners with disabilities (see below), in Battersea Park, London on 16 June and a national show at Trunkwell Park, near Read-



ing, on 16 September. The charity will advise on tool selection and gardening with a disability. Tel: (0373) 464782.

The National Trust has self-drive and volunteer-driven buggies at some of its gardens. Telephone for the list (see below). The Trust also produces a free 48-page information booklet listing all accessible properties. The members' magazine is available free on tape to people with a visual impairment. Free Braille guides are available for an increasing number of properties. Contact Valerie Wenham, Adviser on Access and Facilities for Disabled Visitors, The National Trust. Tel: 071-222 9251.

Town and Country Gardens for the Blind, an award-winning landscape construction company, designs and builds gardens for visually impaired people and to educate sighted people to appreciate the many forms of visual impairment. Free consultation, plan and quotation. Tel: (0798) 42388.

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With sliding doors that open inwards, there is no longer a problem with space even in the smallest of bathrooms.

100% British made, these unique shower units are free of perishable seals and are available in 2 versatile sizes. The 1100x1100mm corner entry offers a full 1000mm showering area, whilst the bath replacement unit is adjustable to 1800mm long.

- 2 versatile sizes
- 2 door options
- Supplied as a complete package
- Sliding doors that open inwards.
- Minimum maintenance.

This unique concept can be used by the able bodied as well as the wheelchair user, and comes complete with easy clean waste system, shower curtain and rail to suit.

Decorative Styrene panels and white aluminium frames ensure a pleasing finish to any bathroom.

For more information on our shower units and our full range of products, please contact either of the numbers shown below.

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HEAD OFFICE **SOUTHERN OFFICE**

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Put the lawn out to grass

I am polio disabled in my left arm so mowing the lawn, even with a Flymo, was a problem. Then I had a brainwave - I would get rid of the lawn. Gasps of horror from my friends.

I'd been thinking about how to do it for months. A drastic step, with or without the horrified gasps. Here's how it was done ...

Only one of the many gardeners in the Yellow Pages answered my messages left on their answerphones. I said I wanted a fence renewed down the full length of the garden and some pruning. Perhaps they have too much work, in which case they shouldn't advertise. Perhaps they were not interested in small London gardens, or perhaps they were just hard hearted.

So, when Mr Cooper rang, there was no choice. He came round with his son, quoted for the fence and the cutting back of trees and extensive weeding.

Then I took the plunge and asked if shingle was possible and practical instead of the lawn.

A good idea, he said, and gave me a reasonable quote for the lot. I decided to go ahead and it was all over and cleared away in three days.

Now there is polythene, invisible under the shingle, to stop weeds coming through, and a shallow wooden edge to contain it all and discourage it from spreading over the paths.

The shingle is treated to stop the cats using it as a giant litter tray and a small bush which used to stand in a dilapidated tub is planted at one corner.

No more back-breaking mowing. Mr Cooper showed me how to pierce the polythene and turn it back to put in a couple of rock plants beside a large flat stone, then you ease the shingle back all round them.

I keep going to the kitchen window to make sure the miracle is still there. The scoffing friends continue with their aching backs and are slaves to their lawns.

Mr Cooper even bought the Flymo!

Eunice Wilson

Renew your subscription in seconds!

You can now renew your *Disability Now* subscription by Access or Visa over the phone. Call Karen King on 071-383 4575.

Win a £10 prize

Can you create-a-caption?

The Mayor of Barnet in London celebrates the opening of Valley Way House respite care unit for people with multiple disabilities. Did the others think it was a bring-and-buy sale? What could they all be saying?

Answers, please, by 15 April to *Disability Now*, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.



JOHN R. RIFKIN

... NEWS QUIZ ... NEWS QUIZ ... NEWS QUIZ ... NEWS QUIZ ...

Answers page 31

1. Which American pop star did Oprah Winfrey interview?

2. Which Government minister was pelted with eggs in protest at pit closures?

3. Which footballer died?

4. Which American religious sect was the target of a police siege in Texas?

5. How much did prescription charges increase by?

6. Who won the England v India test series, and what was the score?

7. Which businessman called for Chancellor Norman Lamont's resignation?

8. Which gothic horror novel was released as a film?

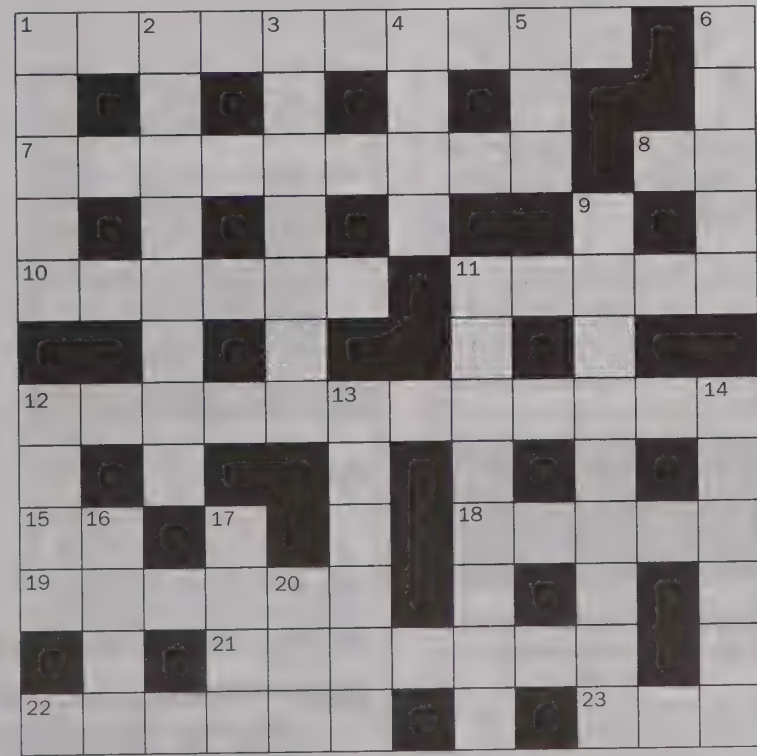
9. Which new film featured the search for medical help for a disabled boy?

10. How old was astronomer Patrick Moore?

DN's crossword

Answers page 31

COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



ACROSS

- 1. Enable (10)
- 7. Ugly (9)
- 8. Longest river in Italy (2)
- 10. Swagger (6)
- 11. Premier (5)
- 12. Things to be proverbially grateful for (5,7)
- 15. Leave (2)
- 18. Coarse person, according to Swift (5)
- 19. Indigenous (6)
- 21. Ancestry (7)
- 22. Island in Kent (6)
- 23. Move fast (3)

DOWN

- 1. Dowdy woman (5)
- 2. Robinson Crusoe, for example (8)
- 3. Clearly reasoned (7)
- 4. London art gallery (4)
- 5. Longest river in Scotland (3)
- 6. Mortar used for tiles (5)
- 9. Cargo ship (9)
- 11. Fan merry (anag)
- 12. Type of language (4)
- 13. Very short period of time (6)
- 14. Said (6)
- 16. Sworn promise (4)
- 17. Oven for pottery (4)
- 20. Compete (3)

March winner

The £10 prize goes to Mr P L Court from Eastbourne for: "Well we've cut everything else, so here goes!"

Thanks to everyone who entered last month, keep them coming!



Free Management Training for Disabled People

Would you like:

- Free access to mainstream quality management training run by Coverdale, Midland Bank and the Post Office?
- Ongoing support and advice from a consultant to help you make personal development & training plans?
- Reimbursement of resulting hotel and travel expenses?

Are you:

- Actively involved in working with others?
- Able to spread the benefit of your training to others?
- Able to commit yourself to a challenging part time programme of training courses, each one of up to five days duration?
- Keen to work alongside managers from major commercial companies?

Coverdale is a leading British management consultancy. As part of our commitment to the community we are offering three places on our Leadership Development Programme to commence Autumn 1993. Educational and work experience backgrounds are less important than a real desire to participate.

For an information pack and application form, contact **Ashleigh Alibhai** on 071-925 0099, or write to the address below. Information is available in large print. **Deadline for receipt of applications is 30 May 1993.**



COVERDALE

The Coverdale Organisation plc
Dorland House
14-16 Regent Street
London SW1Y 4PH

Telephone: 071-925 0099
Fax: 071-491 7636

WHAT'S ON

The Pastel Ball. 4 April at the London Hilton, to raise money for people with cerebral palsy. £75. For tickets, tel: 071-637 9681.

Mobility Options for Passengers, a one day course, 14 April at Banstead Mobility Centre. £30. Contact Barbara Simms, Banstead Mobility Centre, Damson Way, Orchard Hill, Queen Mary's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NR, tel: 081-770 1151.

Designing for People with Mental Disabilities. A conference 15 April in central London. £138.65. More information from the conference coordinator, MacIntyre, 602 South Seventh Street, Milton Keynes MK9 2JA, tel: (0908) 230100.

Spring Conference organised by mid and west Cornwall Downs Syndrome Group and Network 81. 20 April in Truro. Contact Network 81 Cornwall, 4 Fairfield Road, Falmouth TR11 2DN.

Housing and Community Care, workshops examining the needs of disabled people. 22 April in Exeter, 29 April in Hartlepool and 13 May in Barnsley. £10-£40. Details from Rachel Scott, RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London WIN 8AB, tel: 071-637 5400.

Continence for All - a Global Perspective. A conference 26-29 April in Bournemouth. Further information from the conference secretariat, Index Communications, Index House, 19 The Hundred, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 8GD, tel: (0794) 511331.

Dash Mobility Matters Exhibition. 29-30 April in Milton Keynes. Free. Contact Tony Ososki, Creative Marketing, 8 Temple Square, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 2QH, tel: (0296) 394307.

Why not visit ... disABILITY 1993

a major Exhibition of Daily Living Opportunities featuring Disablement Equipment and Services including many leading names.

Hove Town Hall - East Sussex. May 11th 1993.

Come and see what services are available.

Further details from 'disABILITY 1993',
3 Rutland Gardens, Hove. Tel: 0273 208934.
Easy Parking and near Hove Station.

A BETTER FUTURE: IMPROVING PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES FOR THE CARERS OF ELDERLY PEOPLE

To be held on 26 May 1993 at the CSP
Headquarters, 14 Bedford Row, London.

A one-day conference to allow carers the chance to meet physiotherapists to provide an opportunity to share thoughts on the service provided; discuss what can be done to improve the service; exchange information and discuss the ways in which the relationships between carers, physiotherapists and those they care for can develop over the coming years.

Carers will be admitted to the conference free of charge. The delegate rate for physiotherapists and related professionals is £50.

TEAM APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY CARE: A one day conference for therapists and health care professionals

To be held on 28 September 1993 at the
Wembley Conference Centre, London.

This one day conference is open to all Health Care professionals who will be directly affected by the implementation of the Community Care Act.

The day is focused on the Team Approach and the aims of the day are: to provide information on various team approaches being used in the community; to identify the impact of the Community Care Act on service delivery as seen by the Teams; to highlight the difficulties encountered in auditing the effectiveness of this approach.

Further information on both the above courses is available from the Events Unit, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 14 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4ED. Tel: 071 242 1941 ext 233.

INFO

The AA/Rover Guide for the Disabled Traveller includes tips on motoring, places to visit, service stations, ferry crossings and the Orange Badge scheme in Europe. It is free to AA members. £3.95 to others, from bookshops and AA shops.

The A-Z Care Home Guide is a new, annual guide listing thousands of residential care and nursing homes and independent hospitals. The 1993 edition costs £28 (cheques payable to West Dulwich Press Ltd) from A-Z Care Homes Guide, PO Box 436, London SW1W 8BR.

Carers' Rights is a TUC information pack and sample questionnaire designed to help trade union officers put into practice the principles in the TUC Charter for Carers. £2 from TUC Publications, Congress House, London WC1B 3LS.

MOVES

Geoff Busby has been appointed chief executive of Compaid Trust. **Sally Witcher** is the new director of the Child Poverty Action Group.

BEDDING PROTECTION!

Mattress, duvet and pillow covers. Hospital quality PVC. Strong and soft. For brochure and price list, tel: (0494) 537833. DRYNIGHTS.

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Nearly new, hardly used
Electric Wheelchairs,
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All models wanted and for sale.
The right one to suit your individual problem.

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Home visits if required. Tel: Concern for Comfort 081-810 9508.

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**LIGHTWEIGHT, RIGID
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A company run by the disabled - for the disabled

FOR SALE

BEC SOVEREIGN MICROCAR 1991. Hand controls, 4-8 mph. Immaculate cond. £2,500 ovno. Tel: (0245) 357796.

RENAULT EXTRA CONVERSION 1988 very good condition. MOT. £3,000. Tel: (0722) 331573.

BEC STERLING XL scooter in showroom condition, regularly serviced, many extras. Tel: (0753) 860679 (after 3pm).

LIGHTWEIGHT COMPACT folding Quickie 2-wheel chair. 14in seat. Canary yellow. Price £995 ono. Tel: (0334) 82592.

FIAT DUCATO MURVI conversion May '89 (F), 2 litre petrol. Ramp for wheelchair rear entry. Adapted for 1 wheelchair and 5 seats. Mileage 55,000. £5,500. Tel: (02917) 691.

FORTRESS SCIENTIFIC add-on power unit. £75. Tel: 081-673 4310.

WESSEX VERTI-SEAT lift in perfect condition only 2 years old. £2,500 (new £4,000+). Wessex will relocate. Please phone for details, tel: (0903) 874140.

NIAGRA MASSAGE therapy chair. £250 ono. Tel: (0934) 833293 (evenings).

ADJUSTAMATIC BED, 3 ft. Control panel for head and foot massage, etc. Brass headboard, one "cot" side. £800 ono. Tel: (0492) 870461 (Llandudno).

MACERATOR-LOO/SHOWER unit. Install anywhere. Wheelchair use. £950. Tel: (0262) 605879 (Bridlington).

CARCHAIR SYSTEM lift to passenger side, for Ford Escort or similar. VGC. £750. Tel: (0992) 643392 (S. Herts).

SAFARI CAR, petrol. New, hardly used. £1,300. Tel: (0980) 70131.

BEC HORIZON 80 series. Cost Dec '90 - £1,970. Hardly used, as new, battery charger also new. Knee bag/footwarmer never used. £1,500 ono. Tel: (0592) 4553.

THREE WHEELER, racing wheelchair, as new, used three times. Cost £1,200, will sell £750 ono. Injury forces sale. Tel: (0625) 422416.

TURBO EVERAIDS WHEELCHAIR (Bobcat) with standing frame and spare wheels. VGC. Suit child 4 to 9 years. £750. Tel: (0206) 211444.

RENAULT CLIO 1992 fitted with Car-chair system (electric wheelchair). As new 500 miles £11,000. Tel: (0748) 812193.

Neatwork CYCLE FOR HEALTH & FUN

Best range of special needs cycling equipment
CALL NOW
for information or demonstration.
DEALERS NATIONALLY
Tel: 089088 3456 Neatwork, PO Box Z,
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WHEELCHAIR CARRIERS

We create specialist vehicles to carry 4 or 5 passengers plus a wheelchair and its occupant in style and comfort at a reasonable price. We can build to suit your special requirements and funds. Converted vehicles in stock from £4,000. For details ring (0525) 852164 or (0836) 501763 anytime.

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Unwanted Stairlifts Purchased. For nearest Branch call:
Craig Dunnage 081 861 2370 or Rob Hayhurst 0272 252311

GBL SERVICES

MANUAL LIGHTWEIGHT WHEELCHAIRS (NEW & SECONDHAND [ALL TYPES])

- BOUGHT AND SOLD
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- PARTS SUPPLIED ... FITTING AVAILABLE
- HIRING SERVICE AVAILABLE

SPECIAL OFFER - ONE MONTH ONLY

- FREE SET OF TYRES WITH EVERY SERVICE
- LOW, LOW PRICES ON ALL SECONDHAND & EX DEMO CHAIRS
- PLEASE MENTION THIS ADVERT WHEN CALLING

**ADVICE AND ALTERNATIVE ENQUIRIES WELCOME CONTACT
JAMIE: UNIT E3 & E4, SHIELD BUSINESS CENTRE, SHIELD DRIVE,
BRENTFORD, MIDDLESEX TW8 9EX. TEL: 081-569 8955.**

LARK PC, 3 wheeler 4304. Virtually brand new, bought in Nov. 1992, only used twice. Can be viewed at Fleet, Hants. £1,695 new, asking price £1,100. Ring A Sykes, tel: (0252) 616249.

VESSA VITESSE 3 electric chair with battery. Reasonable order. £350 ono. Contact L Wills, tel: (0293) 532106.

RENAULT ESPACE GTS, F reg. Atlas wheelchair conversion with high roof, rear folding ramp. 5 seats plus one wheelchair or 2 seats and 3 wheelchairs. 5 gears, central locking. Silver. 47,000 miles, 12 months tax, 6 months MOT. £9,250. Tel: (0245) 267648 (Essex) 6pm-9pm.

SWIVEL SEAT passenger side (Cowal) as new, inc. all fittings. £350 ono. Tel: (0242) 581786.

CONTROLLED COMFORTABLE "SINGLE" two functions, individually controlled, pine framed. £600 ono. Tel: (0592) 890051.

MEYRA ELECTRIC wheelchair, big wheels at front for kerbs. 6 speeds, indicators, lights, body warmer, etc. Can deliver. £1,500 ono. Tel: (0226) 762736.

1986 SPECIALLY ADAPTED Chairman Escort. 23,000 miles. Immaculate. £3,250. Tel: (0942) 227555.

ORTHO-KINETICS lifting and reclining chair. 6 months old. £550. Cost £1,000 new. Tel: (0303) 872637 (Kent).

SMALL BEC INDOOR electric wheelchair, complete with charger, needs new battery, £150. Vessa Electric wheelchair, needs batteries and new clutch control unit. £75. Tel: (0989) 62496 (day) (0989) 63492 (eves).

HODGE SLIDING SWIVEL car seat, armrests, reclines. As new. £100. Burville car top hoist. As new. £100. Tel: 081-686 8931.

ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR, Vessa Travvla. Perfect condition, full service record. £850 ono inc two new batteries. Ring K M Barret, tel: 081-908 1220.

CHAIRMAN METRO 1.3, December 1989. MOT, 25,000 miles. One owner, immaculate condition. £5,500 ono. (Current price £11,800). Tel: (0244) 831416 (North Wales/Merseyside).

STERLING SCOOTA, as new, bargain £995. Tel: (0452) 611806 (Gloucs).

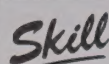
FORD COURIER 1.3 Popular/Combi. K reg. Sept '92. 450 miles only. Man. ramp to take wheelchair passenger. Max height 61 in. £10,000. Tel: (0255) 870769.

CENTRAL & MOBILITY

SPECIALISTS IN QUALITY USED ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIRS, SCOOTERS AND BATRICARS
BOUGHT AND SOLD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY
FULLY GUARANTEED

For a fast and efficient service contact
Mr Evans on 021-366 6796 any time.
Free puncture proofing on all machines.

Purpose built, spacious 2 bedroomed detached bungalow. Large lounge, arched to dining room. Kitchen adapted, low work surfaces. Bathroom can accommodate 2 wheelchairs. Garden landscaped for disabled gardener. Large detached garage, wide enough to take wheelchair and vehicle. Close to local amenities and schools. Price: £75,000. Lordswood, Chatham, Kent. Phone: (0634) 682854.



: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities Information Assistant

Part-time: 17.5 hours per week. Six month post in the first instance.

Skill is a national voluntary organisation working to develop opportunities in post compulsory education and training for people with disabilities and learning difficulties. Skill provides an Information Service for individuals and professionals.

Skill is looking to recruit a part-time Information Assistant to support the Information Officer, involving administrative work, dealing with routine enquiries and other tasks.

The salary is paid pro rata on local government related scale 3/4, points 14-21 - £12,015 - £14,202 including Inner London Weighting.

Applicants should have office administration skills, including the use of a word-processor. Experience of information work and a knowledge of disability or education issues is desirable.

Skill has an equal opportunities policy and considers a person with a disability to have an additional qualification for the post. Skill's offices are fully accessible. There is a no-smoking policy.

Application form, job description and further information from: Skill, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA. 071-274 0565. Charity No. 801971.

Applications must be received by: Wednesday 21st April 1993.

Bristol Dial-A-Ride

A vacancy has arisen for a

DIRECTOR

Rate of pay £15,063-£16,194 per annum (NJC scale points 28 to 30)
30 days annual leave

This post is funded by Avon County Council Planning Highways and Transport Committee (continued funding is subject to review).

The post holder will have overall responsibility for day to day direction of the service. Promote and develop the activities of the service. Ensure that resources of staff, funding, and vehicles are managed within the agreed policies and aims of the service.

Have particular experience in Business Planning.

Disabled people only need apply.

We particularly welcome applicants from African-Caribbean and Asian. Disabled people as they are under represented in the work force (Race relations Act 1976 section 381B applies). BDAR is an organisation run by disabled people and is working towards becoming an equal opportunities employer. (Job share available for this post.)

The closing date is: Friday 30th April 1993.

For an application form please contact: Sue Barter, BDAR, The Greenway Centre, Doncaster Road, Southmead, BS10 5PY. Tel: (0272) 590700.

THE EALING FAMILY HOUSING ASSOCIATION GROUP

Require a

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Salary £17,317 - £20,978 per annum inc. LW
plus Car User Allowance (pay review pending)

The Ealing Family Housing Association Group is strongly committed to ensuring community facilities are suitably planned and fully utilised on existing and new developments, in addition to providing good quality homes at affordable rents to those in the greatest housing need.

An exciting opportunity has arisen for someone with at least two year's experience of working directly with tenant or community groups to help plan and develop community facilities. Candidates must demonstrate an ability to work on own initiative in researching and planning activities on estates. Emphasis will be on tenant involvement and effective participation. Excellent communication skills and an understanding of and commitment to working with a variety of groups including ethnic communities is essential.

The closing date for this post is: 9th April 1993.

For an application pack, please contact: PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, THE EALING FAMILY HOUSING ASSOCIATION GROUP, ST JAMES' HOUSE, 105-113 BROADWAY, LONDON W13 9BE. TEL. NO. 081 579 7434 AFTER 10.00AM.

There is a "No Smoking" policy at this office.

We positively welcome applications from people with disabilities, who are under-represented in our organisation. The Group is committed to providing aids and adaptations necessary to enable its employees to perform their work.

The Ealing Family Housing Association Group is an Equal Opportunities Employer and applications are positively welcomed from all people regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, marital status, sexuality or disability.



MIND IN CAMDEN

Mind in Camden seeks to appoint disabled people to the following posts:

Administrative Assistant

35 hour week, Scale 5 £14,523 to £15,744

To join a small team providing admin support for all areas of MIC's work. The post covers a wide range of administrative tasks including typing and word processing (Wordperfect 5.1), answering enquiries from members of the public by telephone and in person and minuting meetings. The post is based at MIC's offices in Camden Town but also includes travelling to residential projects in other parts of the Borough. Good keyboard/word processing skills and good communication skills essential.

Finance Officer

35 hour week, Scale 5/6 £14,523 to £17,148

To assist the Finance Manager in all aspects of financial administration including salaries, rent accounting for MIC's residential projects and group homes, and banking. Knowledge of Sage and Quattro Pro essential. The post is based at MIC's offices but involves travelling to residential projects in other parts of the Borough.

Shop Manager

Part-time, 21 hours per week over 5 days -
Scale 5/6 £14,523 to £17,148 (pro rata)

To manage MIC's charity shop ensuring that it is kept open and well stocked, recruiting and supervising volunteers and maintaining admin and finance records. The ability to communicate effectively with voluntary workers and the public is essential. The post is based at MIC's shop and at our office nearby.

All posts require occasional attendance at evening meetings.

We are able to apply for grants to buy or adapt equipment and make changes to office space to assist disabled people to take up these posts. The posts are open to all applicants who define themselves as having a disability but Department of Employment grants are available only for posts filled by people who are registered disabled. It may not be possible for MIC to purchase additional equipment without the help of a grant.

Our premises are not wheelchair accessible and, unfortunately, all posts require the ability to climb some stairs. We would be happy to arrange for applicants to visit the premises before applying for a job if they wish to do so. We can also supply job descriptions in large print or braille on request.

Conditions of employment include 27 days holiday plus bank holidays (pro rata for part-time staff) and Employer's pension contribution.

MIC is an equal opportunities employer, users and ex-users of mental health services are encouraged to apply, as are older people.

For application pack write to Personnel, Mind In Camden, Barnes House, 9-15 Camden Road, London NW1 9LQ stating which post you are applying for and quoting ref DN. Closing date 30 April 1993.

FRIENDSHIP AGENCIES



For people with disabilities.
Be assertive and join Handidate.

The Wellington Centre

52 Chevallier Street

Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2PB.

Telephone: (0473) 226950

friends in need

DISABLED PARTNERS

Being disabled need not be a handicap. Are you lonely, bored and longing to make new friends?

WE CAN HELP - CALL US

We specialise in establishing new friends and relationships for all able bodied and disabled people nationwide.

WE CAN HELP - CALL US NOW

081 676 0396

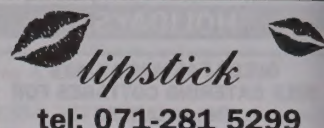


Anybody Any Age Able-bodied or Disabled. Choose Your Own Ideal Relationship. **Mutual Essential Links**, 1 Weir Street, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 5HL. Tel. 0606 49093 (24hrs).

DATES FOR THE DISABLED

- A BETTER LIFE -

36 Park Grove, Edgware,
Middx. HA8 7SJ
Tel. 081-958 9657



WALTHAM FOREST SOCIAL SERVICES

SOCIAL WORKERS/CARE MANAGERS (2 posts)

REF:P1984/DN

£16,170 - £20,217 inc pa

Casual car user allowance

Wyemead Centre, Chingford, London E4

An exciting opportunity has arisen within our new team to work with people with physical and sensory disabilities.

You will have experience of setting up packages of care to enable individuals to live independently in the community, and have the ability to contribute to developing Community Care and self-management by people with disabilities in our Borough.

A relevant qualification, i.e. Dip SW, CSS, is desirable but not essential if you have extensive work experience of severely disabled people and their families, including individual care management.

Personal experience of disability and/or use of British Sign Language, or a major ethnic minority community languages is desirable.

Closing date: 12th April

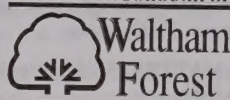
Interviews: week commencing 3rd May 1993.

For an application form/further details contact:

The Personnel Unit, Social Services Department, Municipal Offices, High Road, London E10 5QJ Tel: 081-539 3089 (24 hour answering service)

This post is available for job share. Details available on tape on request.

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF



AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

Waltham Forest serves a multi-racial community and welcomes applications from women, black and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, lesbians and gay men to help build a representative workforce.

Area Allocations Officer

Sheerness, Faversham, Sittingbourne

£16,688-£17,731.

About Swale Housing Association

Swale Housing Association provides a high quality housing service to around 7,500 homes in Kent and is committed to the continued improvement of this service to involve tenants in all aspects of the Association's work.

The Association described by the Housing Corporation as "a significant and powerful regional force" that is "leading the way" in Tenant Participation is well placed to meet the challenges of the 1990's and beyond.

About the Job

The Area Allocations Officers are now posts based in each of our three Area offices. They have been created to apply the Association's allocations policies and to ensure that properties are let equitably and efficiently. You will

- * have at least 2 years experience working in a social housing environment.
- * have an awareness of the issues involved in the assessment of housing need; and
- * have a practical understanding of the application of Equal Opportunities in the allocations process.

If you would like to know more about becoming part of the Swale success story, please contact Pam Martin on (0795) 431134 ext 263, for an application form and information pack.

CV's are not required.

Closing date noon Monday 5th April 1993.

Interviews will be held during week commencing 19th April 1993.

Swale Housing Association particularly welcomes applications from people of black and ethnic origin and disabled people and women who are under represented in the organisation at this level.

The Association operates a "no smoking policy" throughout its offices.

60 Bell Road, Sittingbourne,
Kent ME10 4HE.

DN4/93

Swale
Housing
Association Ltd.

Social Services Department

Ability Not Disability

Southwark Council Social Services Department is keen to ensure that its workforce is representative of the whole of the community we offer services to. People with disabilities are currently under represented in our workforce, and we are addressing this by pursuing a range of positive action initiatives.

The Department welcomes job applications from all people with disabilities, including those who have chosen not to register, and we have a positive action shortlisting policy for registered disabled candidates. Our recruitment procedure focuses on ability, not disability, and all applications are considered on merit.

In Social Services we aim to provide effective induction, training and career development to all staff to enhance the quality of services provided.

If you are interested in joining the department, please return the coupon below to Southwark Social Services, 49 Grange Walk, London SE1 3DY or telephone 071-525 3891.

Arrangements will then be made for you to receive regular vacancy details.



I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THE SOCIAL SERVICES VACANCY LIST

Name

Address

Postcode



Southwark
Council

DN4/93

EALING DISABLEMENT ASSOCIATION
CHIEF OFFICER

Salary Scale S.O.1., £16,101 incl. OLV

We seek a person who is self motivated and a good communicator. You must be aware of current disability issues with experience of working in the disability field. The successful applicant must be computer literate.

The office is fully wheelchair accessible.
Application forms and further information from:
Ealing Disablement Association
The Centre, Bayham Road, London W13 0TQ

Closing date: Friday 23rd April 1993.
E.D.A. is an equal opportunities employer.

TO ADVERTISE YOUR
VACANCIES/COURSES

Please contact the
Advertisement
Manager, Richard
Gresham, Kingslea
Press Limited, 12
Dock Offices, Surrey
Quays Road, London
SE16 2XU. Telephone
071- 252 1362. Fax:
071- 237 8019.

NEWS QUIZ
ANSWERS

1. Michael Jackson
2. Michael Heseltine
3. Bobby Moore
4. The Branch Davidian sect, an offshoot of the Seventh Day Adventist Church
5. 50p
6. 3 - 0 to India
7. Lord Hanson
8. Dracula
9. Lorenzo's Oil
10. 70

CROSSWORD
ANSWERS

- ACROSS: 1. Facilitate
7. Unsightly 8. Po
10. Prance 11. First
12. Small mercies 15. Go
18. Yahoo 19. Native
21. Lineage 22. Thanet
23. Run
DOWN: 1. Frump
2. Castaway 3. Logical
4. Tate 5. Tay 6. Grout
9. Freightier 11. Ferryman
12. Sign 13. Moment
14. Spoken 16. Oath
17. Kiln 20. Vie

SERVICES

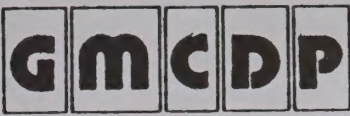
Adam Price Accessible Vehicles

If you need a vehicle to carry up to five seated passengers and a wheelchair but your budget will not stretch to a new one, contact us.

- * Used accessible vehicles supplied
- * Access conversions to your vehicle
- * Passenger use and access conversions to used vans
- * Realistic prices
- * Any make supplied

Our comprehensive service includes locating a suitable vehicle, processing H.M. Customs & Excise requirements and delivery to your door.
Tel: Office (0202) 814112, Mobile (0860) 620779

Deadlines for May issue: booking by 16 April, camera ready artwork/copy by 20 April.



The Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People
is seeking:-

A DEVELOPMENT WORKER

You will need outreach/community work skills and some experience of project development. This is an exciting opportunity to develop your skills in direct contact with disabled people and their organisations.

This post is at NJC Scale 6, £14,106 pa, 25 hours per week, £10,076 pro rata.

The closing date for applications is Friday 16th April 1993

Interviews will be held on 30th April 1993

Please send for information, stating if braille, tape or large print is required, to GMCDP Volunteers Project, Unit 35, Cariocca Enterprises, Ardwick, Manchester M12 4AH.

ONLY DISABLED PEOPLE NEED APPLY.

OFFERING A
WIDE
RANGE OF SERVICES

MEANS

WE CAN OFFER A
WIDE
RANGE OF
OPPORTUNITIES

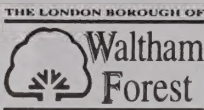
We provide Waltham Forest's multi-cultural community with a wide range of essential services. That means we have a wide range of job opportunities to offer.

Whatever your background, skills, or level of experience, we're bound to have a position to suit you. You don't have to be straight out of school or college with a string of qualifications either.

We regularly have vacancies of all types at all levels - office, craft and manual, and professional.

You will find our job advertisements in the local papers, national press and in various trade and professional journals. Information on our vacancies is displayed at local Job Centres, and details are also circulated to community groups within the Borough.

Contact the Recruitment Officer on 081 527 5544 for our Job List, which is updated each week. Or you can pick up a copy from the Town Hall, Forest Road, London E17 4JF, or from other public offices and libraries. The Job List is also available on tape, upon request.



Waltham Forest serves a multi-racial community and welcomes applications from women, black and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, lesbians and gay men to help build a representative workforce.

For a copy of the Job List return the coupon to The Recruitment Officer, Personnel Department, Town Hall, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4JF.

Name _____

Address _____

DN

HASTINGS & ROTHER DISABILITY FORUM

is seeking a

DISABILITY LINK WORKER

Can you make things happen?

Could you coordinate the efforts of users, carers, social services, health care professionals and voluntary organisations to ensure the effective provision of services for people with physical and/or sensory disabilities in Hastings and Rother?

If you feel you can meet this challenge we would be delighted to hear from you by April 30th 1993.

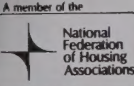
The post is full-time and initially, for a period of 3 years. It is hoped that you could commence in July '93 or as soon as possible after that date. Salary: £14,000 p.a.

The employing body will be East Sussex Association for the Disabled which is an Equal Opportunities employer.

For further details and an application form please write to Mrs M Williams, East Sussex Association for the Disabled, 47 Western Road, Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1RL.

Applications from candidates with disabilities are especially welcome.

EAST BRISTOL YOUTH HOUSING
ASSOCIATION LTD



East Bristol Youth Housing Association is a small local Housing Association providing housing for 90 young single people.

We currently have a vacancy as follows:

HOUSING WORKER (17.5 hours per week) Job share. Salary £12,810
Fixed term (pro rata) until 31st March 1994.

We are looking for someone to join our Housing Team to help manage our shared housing. The successful candidate will have a year's experience of working within the housing field.

Closing date: Thursday 8th April 1993.

East Bristol Youth Housing Association is striving to be an Equal Opportunities Employer and encourages applications from all sections of the community. A large number of our residents come from black and ethnic minority groups and our aim is always to maintain a balance within the staff team to reflect this.

For further information and application form please send a large SAE (stating clearly which job you are interested in and where you saw it advertised) to EBYHA, The Old Co-op, 42, Chelsea Road, Bristol BS5 6AF.

GREENWICH HEALTH AUTHORITY
COMMISSIONING DEPARTMENT

PROJECT WORKER (DISABLED PERSON)

A disabled person with research skills is required to work closely with Health Service Commissioners, Service Providers and disabled service users to:-

- Negotiate with the Commissioning Agency and Service Managers to change services and cultures.
- Produce and disseminate information to enable disabled people to make informed choices.
- Work with users of services to develop quality specifications.

The post will be based with Greenwich Association of Disabled People, but with clearly established links to Commissioning and Provider staff.

The Project is being established on a consultancy basis for which £9,500 will be paid. The timescale will be agreed with the successful applicant but the Project must be completed within the financial year 1993/4.

For further information contact: Miss Eirwen Williams, Commissioning Department, 221 Erith Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 6HZ. Telephone No: 081-302 2678 ext. 2551.

B B C T E L E V I S I O N

Trainee Assistant Producers

Disability Programmes Unit

Do you want to learn to research items, write scripts, direct and produce television programmes? We are looking for 4 unemployed disabled people with the potential to develop these skills in a supportive environment.

The Disability Programmes Unit produces a number of specialist disability series such as: *From the Edge* and *Feelings* and occasional one-off programmes like the recent *Sex and Independence*. It also runs a training scheme for disabled people to acquire television production skills in order to compete for jobs in mainstream television.

At first you'll use your experiences as a disabled person to work on the specialist output of the DPU where you will be able to learn the basics of television production before moving on to work in other areas.

You must have a broad educational background demonstrated either by formal qualifications, private study or self education. You should be able to combine ideas with life experience, have an analytical approach to programme viewing, creative flair and an informed interest in current affairs and disability issues. You'll need to operate effectively as part of a team and be prepared to work outside office hours and away from home as necessary.

Provision of trainees' support and access requirements will be the responsibility of the DPU.

Part-funded by the European Social Fund these traineeships are intended to provide training and re-training of long-term unemployed disabled adults. To be considered you should be aged 25 years or over and have been unemployed for 12 months or more at the time of applying with no previous experience in the Television industry.

These traineeships will be offered as 18 month fixed term contracts. Two will start in the Autumn of 1993 and two in the Spring of 1994.

Salary £14,192 per annum rising to £14,725 after one year subject to completion of training and satisfactory progress plus an allowance of £1565 per annum to compensate for working unpredictable hours. Based West London.

For an application form and information pack contact (quote ref. 12005/DI) BBC Corporate Recruitment Services, PO Box 7000, London W12 7ZY. Tel 081-749 7000. Minicom 081-752 5151.

If you require the form and information pack on tape, in big print, in braille or in BSL sign language please telephone Jenny Leach on 081-576 8477 (voice and minicom).

Application forms to be returned by 23rd April 1993.

WORKING FOR EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY



Goin' fishin'?

Last year's Scottish salmon fishing competition was such a success - see happy runner-up Craig McCartney on the River Doon with ghillie Colin McKenzie (left) - that more *DN* readers will get a chance to have a go this summer.

The competition is sponsored by Clos-O-Mat Ltd, makers of the automatic flushing, washing and drying toilet that can do away with the need for personal assistance.

First prize: three days fishing on the famous River Doon, 5-7 July; accommodation for four nights at the wheelchair-accessible Hospitality Inn; transport to and from Prestwick airport/Ayr station and between the river and hotel; £100 help with travel expenses to Scotland.

Second prize: two days fishing 8-9 July; three nights accommodation; local travel as above; and £50 towards travel expenses.

What do you have to do? Just fill in the answers to the questions below, add your tie-breaker, name and address, cut out and send to: Robert Willan, *DN* Fishing Competition, Clos-O-Mat Ltd, 2 Newton Street, Stretford, Manchester M32 8LG.

Closing date: 3 May 1993
Winners will be notified by 10 May and announced in June *DN*.

DN fishing competition

1. When did Miss Ballantyne catch the British record salmon on the River Tay?

2. Which well-known children's author invented the Elver Sea Trout Fly?

3. Is a Greenwell's Glory a trout fly, a sea trout fly or a salmon fly?

4. Is it the rainbow or brown trout which is native to the UK?

5. Is a Dubbing Twirler used for spinning, fly-tying or rod building?

Complete the following tie-breaker (maximum 12 words):
Fly fishing is my ideal outdoor pursuit because

.....

.....

.....

Name.....

Address.....

I need personal care, so will bring a helper: Yes/No
I use a wheelchair: Yes/No
I shall need to borrow fishing equipment: Yes/No

At Wessex, years of experience have taught us not to see mobility as the problem. Instead we only see people



facing daily difficulties in getting round their homes, their places of work and other areas of public access. People who want to live their lives as fully and as independently as possible.

So, when it comes to designing mobility solutions, we start with the person, not the problem.

Combining all the expertise of a

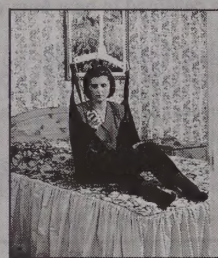
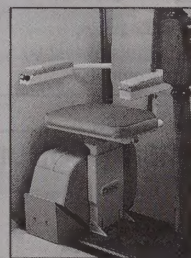


major domestic lift manufacturer with a highly personalised approach, we are committed to providing the best, most individually appropriate solution possible.

Our range of seated and

wheelchair vertical lifts, stairlifts, hoists and door openers are all engineered to meet individual needs. And with options and adaptations specifically designed to accommodate personal circumstances, Wessex can rightly claim to have the answer to almost every mobility problem.

Contact us for more information - we're sure you'll soon discover how, by looking at the person and not the problem, the Wessex approach makes all the difference.



Phone us Free on
0800 581223
or complete
the coupon
below

Please send me more information about the Wessex product range: (Tick box)

Vertical lifts - seated ☐ Vertical lifts - wheelchair ☐

Stairlifts ☐ Hoists ☐ Door Openers ☐ All products ☐

Name

Address

Post Code Tel. No.

Nicholas Duncan, Wessex Medical Equipment Company Limited,
FREEPOST, Budds Lane, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 8ZT

Wessex

CHOOSING QUALITY WITH CARE

DN4/93



WE SEE THE
PERSON
NOT THE
PROBLEM.